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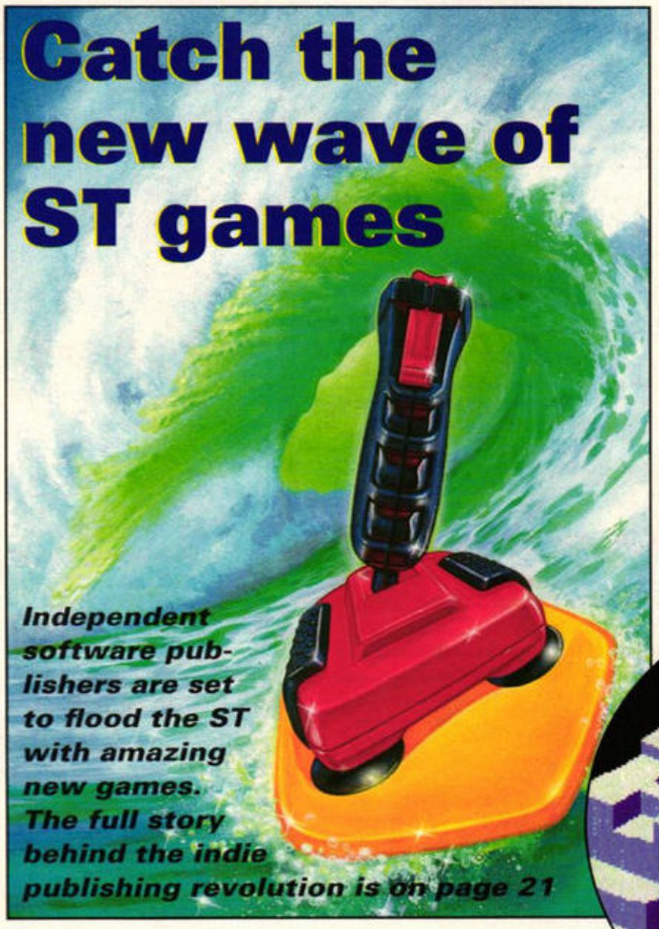

Independent software publishers are set to flood the ST with amazing new games. The full story behind the indie publishing revolution is on page 21

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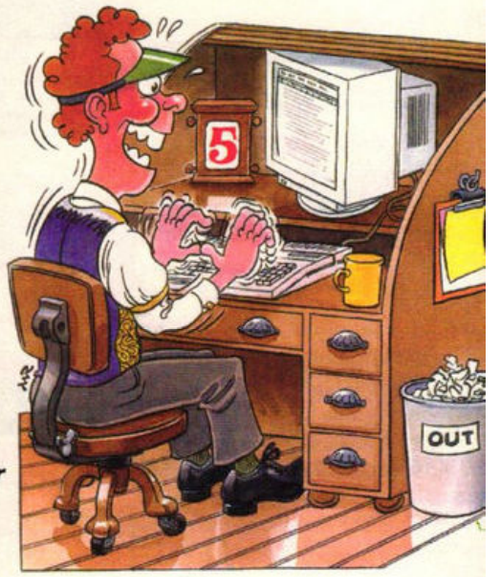
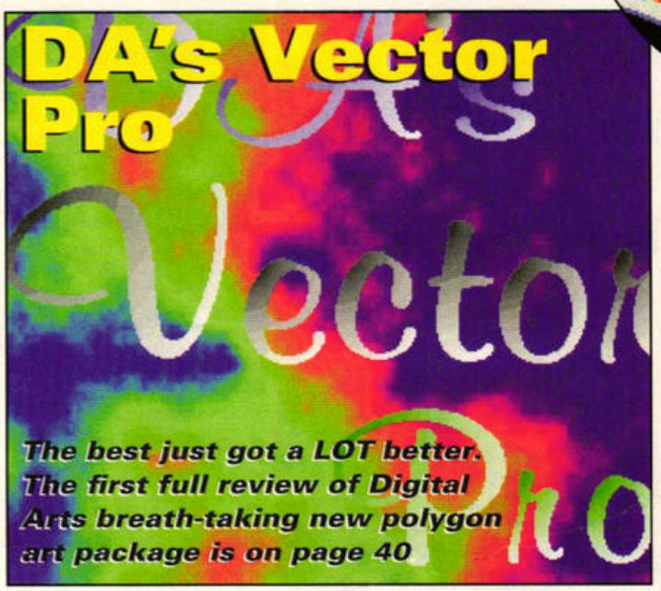


Get the right word processor for your ST, for your need, for the right price. This is only Word Processor guide you'll ever need for your ST starts on page 27

Coin-ops to consoles

The OTHER Atari story. How can yesterday's arcades will make '90s gaming great? Is the Jaguar the ultimate Atari?

DA's Vector Pro



The best just got a LOT better. The first full review of Digital Arts breath-taking new polygon art package is on page 40

COVER DISK 60

7 GREAT PROGRAMS ON DISK

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ABC July - Dec 1993 43,469 Member of the Audit Bureau of Circulations

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■ Record direct-to-disk with *SAM 2 Disk.*

■ Kiss dull Desktops goodbye with *Deskpic!*

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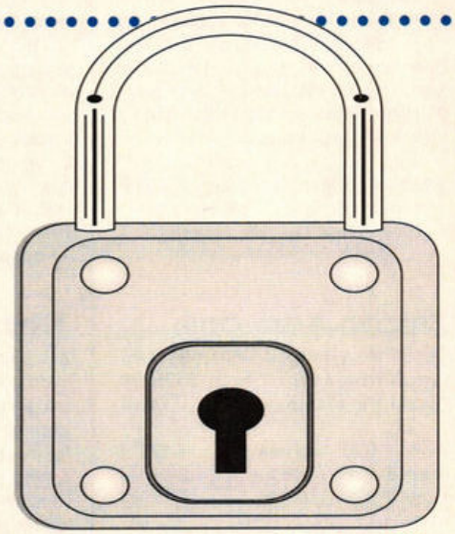

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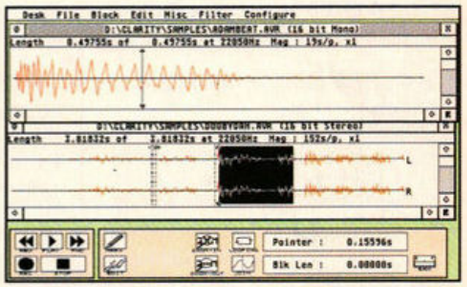

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The award winning SM14 is a perfect replacement for the Atari SM124/5 monochrome monitors: it exceeds Atari's original specifications. The 14" high resolution, paperwhite FST (Flatter, Squarer Tube), gives a perfectly centred, crisp, sharp image without blurring at the edges.

The SM14 comes without, and the SM14s with, a speaker. The SM14f is for the Falcon. A Tilt and Swivel stand comes as standard.

The special version for STfm/Mega ST installed with Overscan, the screen enhancer, gives a 40% bigger display.

All monitors come as a plug-in-and-go unit, complete with Atari plug, and no adaptors are necessary.

"Essential Buy, 90%"
ST Review, May 93

without audio	SM14/f	£129.95
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The MiniS Hard Drive System comes with drive capacities ranging from 170Mb up to 1800Mb. This full SCSI system is hardware compatible with all Atari computers, Amiga, Mac, PC etc. They are unrivalled in size, noise, speed, and style and come with a thru port for expansion.

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Please add £20 to ST(FM/e) if the ICD Link is required.
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Falcon 030 Systems - 32Mhz

The Falcon is fast becoming the prefered choice for 8 track digital recording, with powerful programs such as Cubase Audio using it to its full potential. The DSP chip opens up a whole new world of Sound and Graphics. System Solutions now supply 32Mhz Falcon 030 computers from stock.

PowerUp2 is a brand new 32Mhz accelerator for the Falcon, available now. PowerUp2 doubles the CPU clock speed and does not take up the internal expansion slot.

We supply systems for Music, Desk Top Publishing, Image Manipulation, Animation, Desk Top Video, fax & modem use etc. Please phone for your personal quotation of a tailor-made Falcon 030 System.

PowerUp2 kit	£59.95
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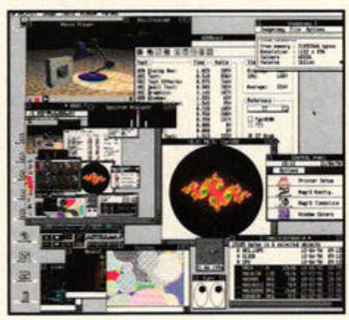
Mag!X - Multitasking Operating System

Definitely the most exciting product this year is **Mag!X** - Multitasking Operating System. Written by the same programmers that brought you NVDI and the replacement desktop EOS, **Mag!X** is likely to become the standard by which all other Atari operating systems are judged.

Mag!X runs on all Atari ST/STe/Mega and TT computers with 512Kb, but 2Mb Ram is recommended for a useful working system. Not only does this system run several programs at the same time, but it has been so highly optimised that running one application under **Mag!X** is actually faster than under normal TOS. The Falcon version is promised for later in the year.

Also available is the lightning fast file manager **Kobold**.

Mag!X	£59.95
Mag!X and NVDI	£89.95
Kobold 2.5	£59.95



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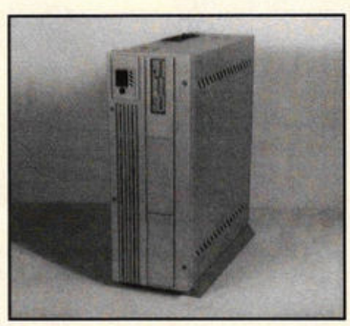

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COVER DISK

MONTHLY MENU

Music Mon 2
Useable demo of the new version of this great sound tracker creator. 1MByte only.
Uncompressed size: 483K
Page 8

Snacman
Brilliant new version of *Pac-man* with enhanced stereo sound on the STE. 1MByte.
Size: 135K Page 10

Sam 2 Disk
Hurrah! At long last! Direct-to-disk recording for any ST with a sound sampler and hard drive.
Size: 45K Page10

DeskPic
Paste Windows-style designs onto your Desktop using this great set of utilities.
Uncompressed size: 130K
Page 9

AutoRAM
A new kind of RAMdisk program for your ST.
Size: 99K Page 7

Diskfree
Keep an accurate record of your disk usage and free up useful disk space.
Uncompressed size: 119K
Page 7

Bass instrument samples
20 super bass instrument sound samples for you to use with *Quartet*.
Uncompressed size: 102K
Page 11

See the *Quartet* feature on page 90 for details of building Voice Sets.

Cover Disk Backup
Use our back up program to make perfect copies of your Cover Disk
Size: 13K Page 11

AUTORAM

BY: SHORTTURN SOFTWARE
RESOLUTION: ALL RESOLUTIONS
MACHINE: ALL STS
MINIMUM MEMORY: 512K, 1MBYTE RECOMMENDED
FOLDER: AUTORAM, AUTO
FILES: 1ST_RAM.PRG, 2ND_RAM.PRG, COPY.PRX, CREATE.PRG, SELECT.PRG, AUTORAM.DOC
SIZE: 99K
GET STARTED WITH: AUTORAM.DOC, SEE BELOW

RAMdisks are pretty handy things if you haven't got a hard drive and you need to load software in a hurry – all you have to do is move the files and programs you need to the RAMdisk and use them in the same way as you would a file on a floppy disk. *AutoRAM* is a small suite of programs that enables you to set up and use RAMdisks without really thinking about it – as long as you have enough memory. Copy the Auto folder containing the AutoRAM files to a blank disk and reset your ST. A menu appears with a list of options enabling you to choose specific RAMdisk setups and software to load into the RAMdisk using the file selector. Read AUTO RAM.DOC for detailed instructions about setting up *AutoRAM*.

DISKFREE

BY: P J MILLER
RESOLUTION: MEDIUM OR HIGH RESOLUTIONS
MACHINE: ALL STS
MINIMUM MEMORY: 512K HARD DRIVE INSTALLABLE
FILES: DISKFREE.TOS
UNCOMPRESSED SIZE: 119K
GET STARTED WITH: README.TXT, SEE BELOW

If you need to keep a record of your disk usage and free space then this is the program for you. *Diskfree* reads all connected disks – including floppies – and checks to see how much space is free, once calculated, this is then displayed in a table. Using the save option you can keep a record of the free space, the next time you use the program the free space is displayed and compared with the last reading. In this way you can keep track of your disk usage, you can even keep a physical copy using the Print option of the program.

Copy the DISKFREE.TOS file to a blank disk or a folder on a hard drive partition and double-click on it to decompress it. All you have to do now is run DISKFREE.PRG to check your disk usage. See the README.TXT file for registration details and full instructions.

	00/00/00	00/00/00	00/00/00	00/00/00	04/05/94	05/05/94	
A:	0k	0k	0k	0k	4k	4k	A:
B:	0k	0k	0k	0k	4k	4k	B:
C:	0k	0k	0k	0k	1768k	1704k	C:
D:	0k	0k	0k	0k	4410k	4410k	D:
E:	0k	0k	0k	0k	25370k	25370k	E:
F:	0k	0k	0k	0k	4486k	4484k	F:
G:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	G:
H:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	H:
I:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	I:
J:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	J:
K:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	K:
L:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	L:
M:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	M:
N:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	N:
O:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	O:
P:	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	0k	P:

Diskfree uses a rather garish default palette in medium resolution and uses the different colours to highlight the different results.

Diskfree enables you to keep track of your free disk space over a period of time so you can see how your disk usage pattern alters.

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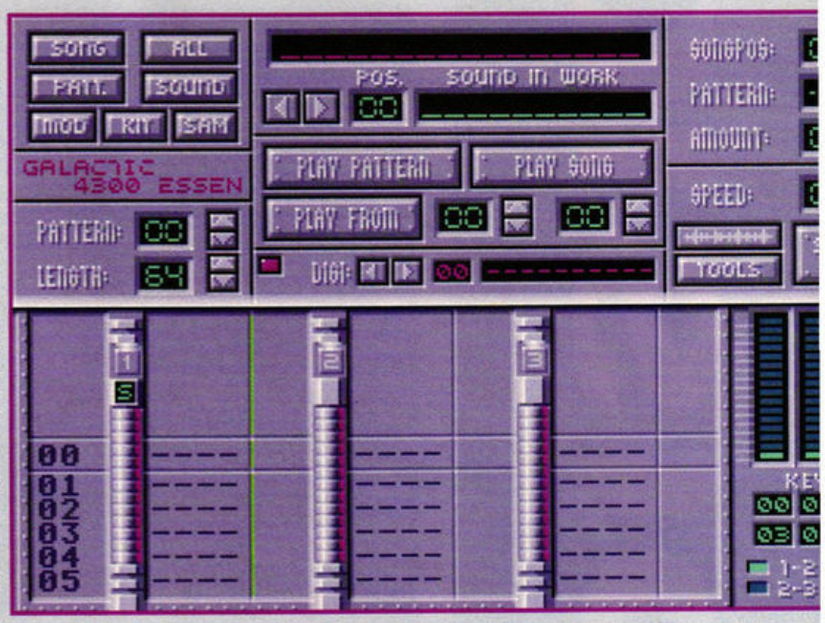
MUSIC MON 2

BY: GALACTIC
RESOLUTION: LOW AND HIGH RESOLUTIONS
MACHINE: ANY ST OR FALCON
MINIMUM MEMORY: 1 MBYTE
HARD DRIVE INSTALLABLE
FILES: MM1.TOS, MM2.TOS, MM3.TOS
UNCOMPRESSED SIZE: 483K
GET STARTED WITH:
E_MANUAL.TXT, SEE BELOW

***Music Mon 2* is a fantastic** sound editor for the ST and Falcon030 that enables you to generate fantastic sounds and create great tunes on them using the built-in sequencer.

Before you do anything else you have to unpack the software. Because *Music Mon 2* is so big we've compacted it into three different files, although you only actually need two of them for your system. If you are using a colour ST system then you need MM1.TOS and MM2.TOS, if you have a high resolution setup you need MM1.TOS and MM3.TOS. All you have to do is copy the two TOS files you need to a blank work disk and then run them, each TOS file unpacks automatically and puts all the files in the correct folders. Once you have unpacked the TOS files you can delete them from your work disk.

Because *Music Mon 2* doesn't use GEM at all you can't use any Desk Accessories from within it – so there's no point loading any Accessories if you are going to use the program because they just take up memory you could be using for your music. Another tip is to disable any time utilities like screen clocks because they may interfere with the timing of *Music Mon*.



Here's where you load in your samples, sounds, songs and other assorted music related files.

Wibble ye not

To get going all you have to do is run the MUSICMON.PRG – both the colour version and the mono version work in exactly the same way – and wait for the program to load. The intro screen makes a quick appearence and the main title comes up with a merry tune playing in the background – enjoy the music for a few seconds before pressing the Spacebar to continue.

Now you are at the main screen where you can enter music, the bottom part of the screen is where all the music is inputted and edited, on the left of the input area is a position indicator alongside three large columns – one for each of the sound channels. All input to these columns is performed from either the ST keyboard or from a MIDI instrument.

The top four rows of the keyboard are set up enabling you to enter notes as if they were on a standard piano keyboard with the notes running in the standard C, D, E, F, G, A, B, C pattern. The keys cover the lower two octaves, pressing <F1> to <F4> shifts everything up by two octaves so you can cover the seven and a half octaves on a standard piano keyboard. Pressing the keys enters the notes into the list.

Because this is a demo version of the program, some of the save functions are disabled – this means you can create tunes but you can't save them to disk. Full instructions are contained in the text file E_MANUAL.TXT that decompresses with the main programs, read and you can master *Music Mon 2*.

MIDI IN

Instead of the more standard note system of musical input, Music Mon uses a raster display split into semiquavers which make it a lot easier to use if you are not too brilliant at musical notation. You can also enter music information into the program using an attached MIDI keyboard or from the ST keyboard. This combination of features enables you to create excellent music in a simple way.

ST KEYBOARD INPUT

The ST keyboard is setup to represent a piano keyboard over two octaves with the keys set out as follows working from the bottom of the keyboard upwards.

Row 1: Keys from <\> to </> represent the notes C to FI.

Row 2: Keys from <A> to <'> represent notes C sharp to F sharp.

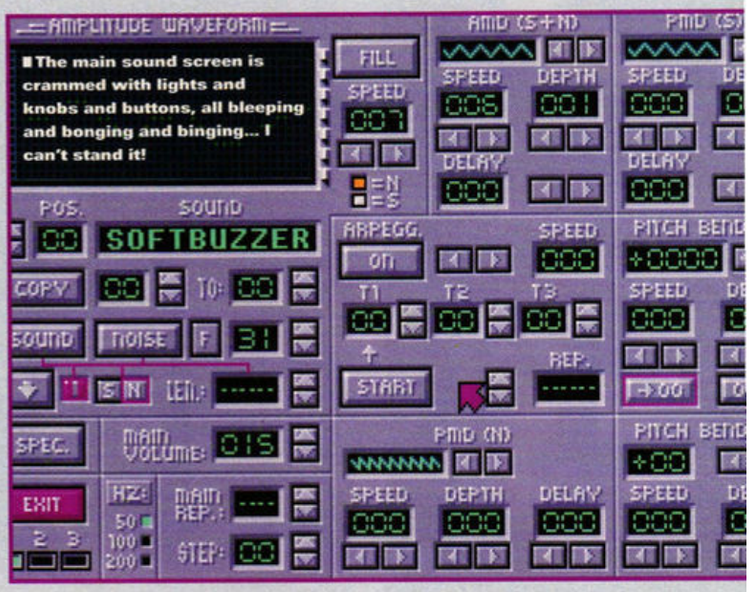
Row 3: Keys from <Q> to <]> represent the notes CI to GII.

Row 4: Keys from <2> to <'> represent the notes C sharpI to G sharpII.

All of it

If you like using this demo version of Music Mon 2 then why not get the complete program from CGS Computerbild for just £30, give CGS a call on ☎ 081 679 7307.

And the winner is... The Piano. Kindly step forward and claim your prize.



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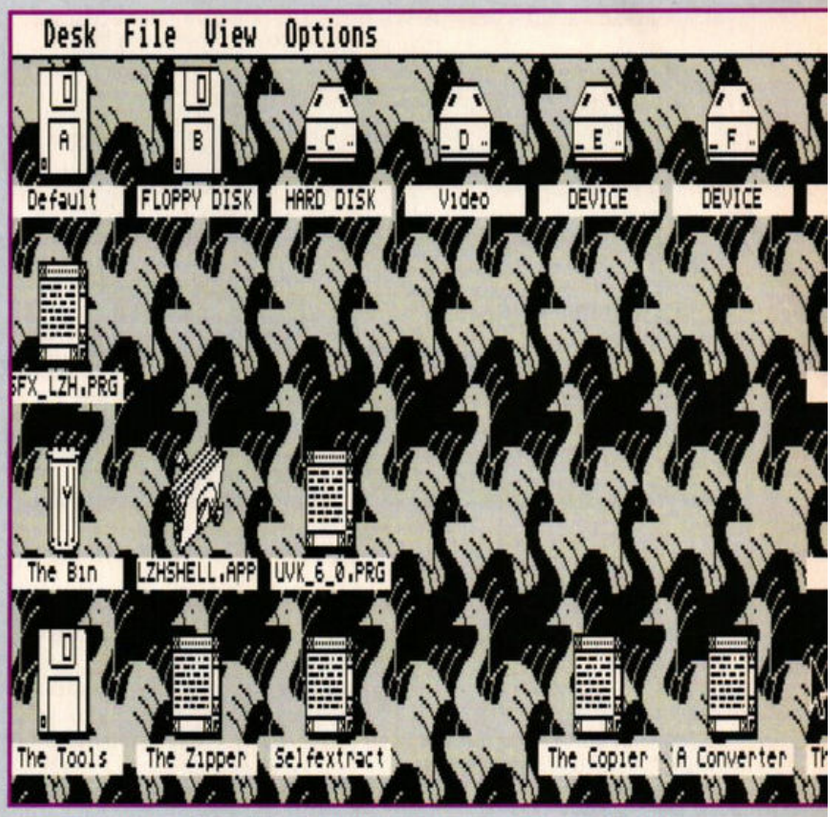
EXTRACTING COMPRESSED PROGRAMS

The following instruction assume a single drive setup set to medium resolution

1. Format a blank disk and mark it as Disk B. This is the destination disk.
2. Get your backup copy of your Cover Disk, mark it as Disk A then put it into the disk drive. This is your source disk.
3. Click on the Drive A icon, a window opens with the folders on the Cover Disk displayed within it. If you can't see the Drive B icon, move the window so you can see it.
4. Double-click on the folder containing the file you want to copy so you can see the contents. Click on the file you are going to copy and keep the mouse button pressed, now drag the file over the top of the Drive B icon.
5. When the Drive B icon turns black release the mouse button. The Copy Files dialog box appears, now click on OK to start the copy.
6. An alert box appears telling you to put Disk B into Drive A. Do so, and click on OK. Your ST now tells you when to swap disks, follow the instructions on screen and don't mix up the disks.
7. When the file is copied put the Cover Disk away and close all of the windows on screen. Put Disk B into the drive and click on the Drive A icon.
8. When the window opens double-click on the TOS file to start the extraction process, after a few minutes a message tells you to press <Return>.
9. You can now delete the TOS file from disk B. Follow the instructions in the magazine for the particular program you are using and read all doc files on the disk.
10. Repeat as necessary for any other self-extracting TOS files on the Cover Disk.



All you have to do is create small images using an art package is to load them into *DeskPic* using the Accessory, the images are then painted on the screen.

DESKPIC

BY: NORBERT MARSCHALLECK
RESOLUTION: ALL RESOLUTIONS
MACHINE: ALL STS AND FALCON030
MINIMUM MEMORY: 512K
HARD DRIVE INSTALLABLE
FILES: DESKPIC.TOS
UNCOMPRESSED SIZE: 130K
GET STARTED WITH: SEE RIGHT

***DeskPic* enables you to place a** neat background pattern on your Desktop but, unlike most other programs that can do this, it doesn't load in a full screen picture. Instead, it loads in a small GIF file and pastes it across and down the screen like wallpaper.

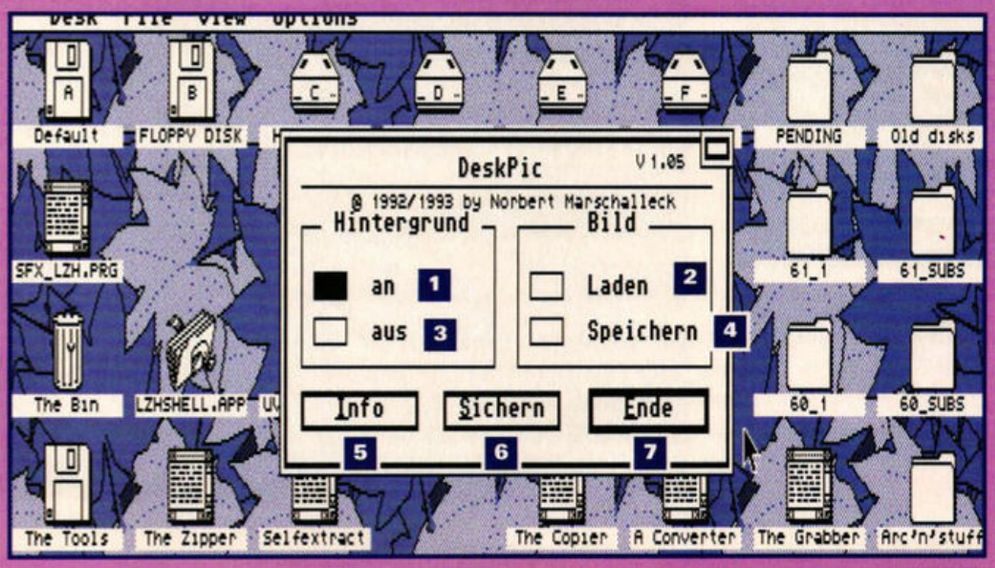
The program is contained in a self-extracting file, all you have to do is copy DESKPIC.TOS to a blank disk and run it, the program decompresses automatically and creates the correct files and folders on the disk including an Auto folder containing DESKPIC.PRG. Now reset your ST with the disk in the drive and the *DeskPic* program and Desk Accessory load into memory. Go to the Desk menu and select *DeskPic* from the drop-down menu, a small dialog box appears containing the *DeskPic* control panel. To load a wallpaper image select the Laden button, the file selector appears and you can select one of the 18 GIF files we have included on the disk. After a few seconds the background wallpaper appears.

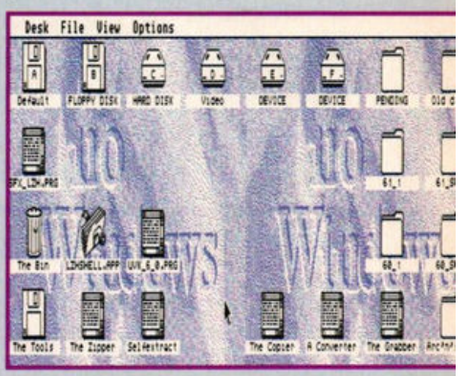
If you want to create your own images in an art package you can save them in GIF, Gem Image IMG, STAD-PAC, *Degas, Neochrome, Doodle* and Targa TGA formats – *DeskPic* can load them all. There's a large document file – in German – telling you exactly how to use *DeskPic,* but all you need to know is right here!

OOOHH! IT'S ALL IN GERMAN!

DeskPic is a German program so all the controls are marked in German. Don't worry, we'll tell you what does what

1. **An: On, switches on DeskPic.3. Aus: Off, turns off *DeskPic*.**
2. **Laden: Load, load a GIF file from disk.**
3. **Aus: Off, turns off *DeskPic*.**
4. **Speichern: Save the colour palette to disk.**
5. **Info: Tells you all about *DeskPic*, in German.**
6. **Sichern: Save info to the disk for auto-loading**
7. **Ende: Exit the Desk Accessory.**





In fact, this is exactly what those poor people with their PCs can do with Windows - it's called Windows wallpaper.

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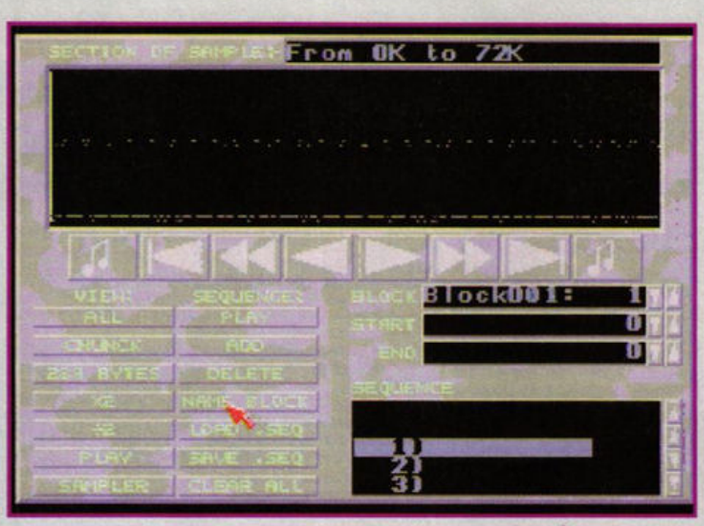


Welcome to Samples-R-Us, the totally new sample sequencer available from a shop near you today!

SAM 2 DISK

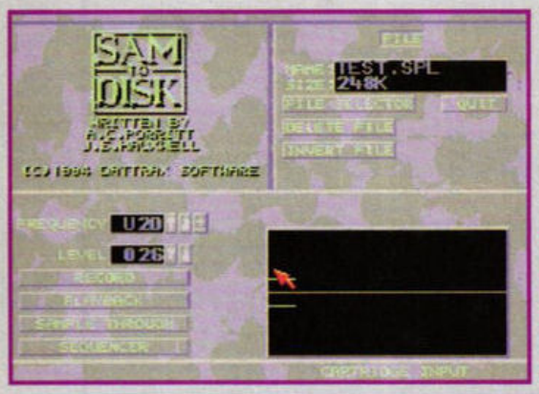
BY: DAATRAX SOFTWARE
RESOLUTION: LOW
MACHINE: ALL STS
MINIMUM MEMORY: 512K
HARD DRIVE INSTALLABLE
SOUND SAMPLER AND HARD DISK REQUIRED
FOLDER: SAM2DISK
FILES: SAM2DISK.PRG, SAM2DISK.DOC
SIZE: 45K
GET STARTED WITH: SAM2DISK.DOC, SEE RIGHT

No, this isn't a joke. Using *Sam 2 Disk* you can record digital sound data direct to hard drive using an ST, one of four popular sound samplers and a hard drive.

Copy the SAM2DISK folder to a partition of your hard drive, preferably an empty one because sound data takes up a lot of drive space. Once you have copied the folder run SAM2DISK.PRG and you are presented with the main screen of the program with the cartridge input displayed at the bottom right. There are a couple of simple rules you must follow before you can start sampling; you must select the name of the file using the file selector, select the sampling frequency and decide whether the sample is signed or unsigned.

All you have to do to sample a file is click the Sample button and follow the on-screen instructions, it's as simple as that. Another great feature of *Sam 2 Disk* is the sample sequencer, you can define up to 1,000 sample blocks which can be listed and played in sequential order. The only part of *Sam 2 Disk* disabled is the save sequence option – everything else is in fully working order. As ever, full instructions are contained in the SAM2DISK.DOC file on the disk so you can use this great program to its full potential.

See the Completely Brilliant box for details of the complete version of *Sam 2 Disk*.



Sam 2 Disk's main screen where you can get to grips with D2D recording on any ST, the window at the bottom right displays the incoming sound.

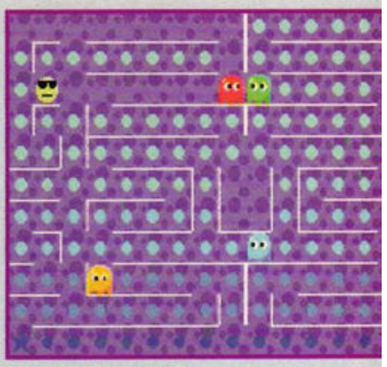
"OK gentlemen, choose your sampler. I want a good clean sample with no hiss or crackle. Take ten paces, turn and sample!"

SNACMAN

BY: IMPACT SOFTWARE
RESOLUTION: LOW RESOLUTION
MACHINE: ALL STS
MINIMUM MEMORY: 1MBYTE
HARD DRIVE INSTALLABLE
JOYSTICK REQUIRED
FOLDER: SNACMAN
FILES: SNACMAN.PRG
SIZE: 135K
GET STARTED WITH: SEE BELOW

Yes, you've guessed it – ***Snacman*** is, in fact, a damn fine clone of *Pacman* for the ST with some extra features thrown in that are not found in the standard coin-op or in the "official" versions that found their way onto the good old 8-bit computers in the early '80s.

Along with the usual *Pacman* routine there are a couple of added options so you can get a bit more out of the game. Most versions of *Pacman* give you just the single option of player vs ghosts, *Snacman* has two- and three-player modes accessed by pressing the



This cool dude in the shades is *Snacman*, zooming around the maze to eat all those little pods. Don't forget that this is Shareware - and it's only £2 to register.

COMPLETELY BRILLIANT

This version of *Sam 2 Disk* is a fully working demo with just the save feature of the sequencer section disabled. If you want to get the full version with the sequencer options of *Sam 2 Disk*, stick your hand in your pocket and send either a cheque or PO for £35.99 to Dattrax Software, 201 York Road, Hartlepool, Cleveland, England TS26 9EE. In addition to the full version of the program you get a *STOS Basic* routine for playing back samples, a program to print sequence lists and a sample splitter enabling you to chop huge samples down into handy disk-sized chunks for transfer to another ST.

HARDWARE REQUIREMENTS

Before you can use *Sam 2 Disk* you need at least one of the following sound samplers as a digital sound source, *Master Sound, Stereo Master, Stereo Replay* or *Replay 16. Sam 2 Disk* does not work with any other sound samplers. You also need a hard drive to record the samples because floppy drives are much too slow for this kind of function.

The only other limitation is that the maximum sampling speed is 20KHz, it's not that bad, you can create respectable sound samples at 20KHz using the samplers supported.

CUTTING CORNERS

Instead of using the mouse you can use a range of keyboard shortcuts to operate Sam 2 Disk. There's a different set of shortcuts for the sampler and the sequencer screens

Sampler keys

<+> and <->: Change sample sign.
Up/Down arrows: Increase or decrease frequency.
Left/Right arrows: Increase or decrease level.
F: Select sample using the file selector.
R: Records sound sample to your hard disk.
S: Sample Through, listen to your sound input.

Sequencer

<Return> or <Enter>: Add to sequence list.
<Delete>: Delete an entry on the sequence list.
<L>: Load sequence file from disk.
<S>: Save sequence to disk.
<Alternate><C>: Clear sequence from memory.
<N>: Name block.
<+>: Select next block.
<->: Select previous block.
Up/Down arrows: Move through sequence list.
Left/Right arrows: Move through blocks.
<P>: Play sequence.
<Esc>: Go to sampler screen.

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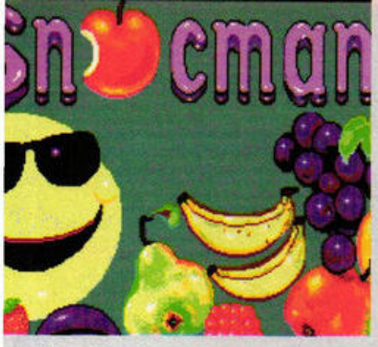

■ Lurvely colourful title screen for *Snacman*, and the tune's in stereophonic sound if you play the game on an STE!

<F1>, <F2> and <F3> keys. Pressing the <Esc> key during a game takes you back to the menu screen and <F10> takes you to the Desktop.

So what do you have to do? Well, you just dash around the maze eating the all the pods – the little round thingies – while avoiding the ghosts. Their touch means instant dismissal from the level. Unlike other versions of *Pacman* you have to start each maze from the beginning if you die, making the game much harder than the original. To make it even harder, there are only two star-shaped power pills that enable you to chase and eat the ghosts – sweet revenge at last – instead of four in the traditional incarnation.

When you kill a ghost a piece of fruit appears in the ghost pit, if you are quick you can nip in and grab it for extra points. If you manage to gather a mere 20,000 points you get an extra life. And that's all you have to do!

Setting up *Snacman* is dead easy, just copy SNACMAN.PRG to a blank disk or a hard drive partition and double-click on it to load the game, if you get a high score then *Snacman* generates a file called HISCORES.DAT, this file loads in the next time you play the game. Time to get munching, with one of the best packman clones ever seen on the ST.

One meg only

Snacman does works on some – but not all – 512K STs if you copy SNACMAN.PRG to the Auto folder and reset your ST. On some 512K STs it works and on others it doesn't – seemingly at random – if it doesn't work on your ST make sure you have cleared memory by switching it off for at least 30 seconds before trying to load up *Snacman*.

Snack-tastic multi-player modes

You can play against your ST in single-player mode by selecting <F1> where you have to run against the clock, in single-player mode you can use the cursor arrow keys or joystick one to move *Snacman* around.

Pressing <F2> zips you into two-player mode, the arrow keys control *Snacman* while joystick one controls Eeney – the red ghost. The <F3> key moves you gently into three-player mode, once again *Snacman* is controlled by the cursor keys, Eeney – the red ghost – by joystick 1 and Meeney – the green ghost – by joystick two. There's no time limit in multi-player games.

<F4> and <F5> also take you to multi-player modes, the difference here is that *Snacman* is controlled by joystick one and Eeney is controlled by the cursor keys.

COVER DISK BACKUP

BY: BRIAN TILLEY
RESOLUTION: ALL RESOLUTIONS
MACHINE: ALL STS
MINIMUM MEMORY: 512K
HARD DRIVE INSTALLABLE
FOLDER: BACK_UP
FILES: BACK_UP.TOS
SIZE: 13K
GET STARTED WITH: SEE BELOW

Backing up your Cover Disk couldn't be easier using our amazing Cover Disk *Backup* program, it's always best to be on the safe side and use backups because you never can tell when disaster may strike – the old '40s film the *Magnetic Monster* was based on an actual event that has been hushed up by the US Secret Service.

All you have to do is stick the Cover Disk in the disk drive and have a couple of blank disks handy – two copies of the Cover Disk are always better than one. Now run BACK_UP.TOS and wait for the menu screen to appear, follow the on-screen instructions and you'll soon have two wonderful backup copies of Cover Disk 60 grasped firmly in your hands.

Remember to put your original disk in a safe place once you have created your copies and only work from the backup copies. It all makes sense in a strange, data protection kind of way.

BASS INSTRUMENT SAMPLES

BY: DIGITAL DESIGNS
RESOLUTION: ALL RESOLUTIONS
MACHINE: ANY ST
MINIMUM MEMORY: 512K
HARD DRIVE INSTALLABLE
FILES: BASS.TOS
UNCOMPRESSED SIZE: 102K
GET STARTED WITH: SEE BELOW

Aha! If you're getting a bit bored of the samples we supplied with *Quartet* on Cover Disk 58 – turn to page 92 to order a copy if you missed it – then here are 20 more AVR samples to use. This month we've chosen 20 bass instruments for you to add to your collection, you can use these AVR files to build new voice sets using the VOICES.PRG supplied on Cover Disk 58 – for full details of using the voice set editor turn to page 90 for this month's *Quartet* masterclass.

The samples are compressed, of course, so we could get them on the Disk, copy BASS.TOS to blank disk and run it. The 20 sound samples decompress so they're ready for you to use. We're getting even more AVR samples on future *ST FORMAT* Cover Disks, next month we've got a load of drum samples for you.to use.

TEN TIPS FOR COVER DISK SATISFACTION

1. Write-protect your Cover Disk by sliding the black tab so you can see through the hole; this prevents you from accidentally erasing data.
2. Make a backup copy using the *ST FORMAT Back-Up* program, see the instructions on page 11.
3. Always read the instructions for the program you are using on the Cover Disk pages and in any document file on the disk.
4. Never run software directly from the Cover Disk except the *Back-Up* program, and always use your backup disk.
5. Never try to decompress self-extracting TOS files on the Cover Disk, always copy them to a blank disk.
6. If you have any general problems with your ST, consult your manual. If you are still stuck then write to ST Answers, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.
7. If you can't load, copy or back up your Cover Disk programs then you may have a faulty disk – it happens sometimes. Send the disk and a padded self-addressed envelope to: *ST FORMAT* July Disk Returns, PO Box 21, Daventry, NN1 5BU
We pay the return postage. Don't send faulty disks to our Bath or Somerton offices because we don't keep stocks of Cover Disks there.
8. If you are having problems with a Cover Disk program go back and read the Cover Disk pages and any DOC files on the disk. If you still can't get the program running, call the *ST FORMAT* Cover Disk Hotline on ☎ 0225 442244 on Wednesdays between 2pm and 6pm only – we can't accept calls at any other time.
9. If you have other hardware or software queries, contact the manufacturer or publisher. Alternatively, ring the official Atari Helpline on ☎ 031 332 93233 between 6pm and 11pm Monday to Saturday and 8pm and 11pm on Sundays.
10. *ST FORMAT* Cover Disks are double-sided, if you have an old STFM and cannot read the Cover Disk then you should upgrade your ST to a double-sided drive.

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Daytime phone _____ Program title _____

_____ Total size in K _____

On a separate sheet, explain concisely what the program does and why you happen to think it's so brilliant.

Remember to: ■ Include on-disk and paper documentation ■ Write your name and address on the disk ■ Use a virus-free disk ■ Keep a copy of your program, because contributions are non-returnable ■ Enclose an attractive bribe. Not that it makes a difference.

Please sign the following declaration: This program is submitted for publication in *ST FORMAT*. It is wholly my own work and I hereby agree to indemnify Future Publishing against any legal action should copyright problems arise.

Signed _____

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JAGUAR GOES PC

Will the Jaguar's PC potential give it and edge in the Format Wars. We'll know in by the summer of '95, but here's hoping.

Atari are joining forces with IBM PC specialists Sigma to produce a Jaguar card for PCs, and this new PC add-on should be available by Christmas. The new plug-in board when activated would effectively turn the business machine into a state-of-the-art console. In a single step this increase the potential user base of the new console by some 10 million in the United States alone. Combining Sigma's Reel-Time full motion video capabilities and the Jaguar's 64-bit power the new partners hope to bring "the hottest video game technology and software titles to the Desktops of users worldwide." (Julian Nguyen, Sigma Systems). "Knowing there would be great demand for Jaguar on personal computers we designed the system to talk easily to leading computer architectures. This has enabled us to move quickly... to make this happen before Christmas." (Sam Tramiel, Atari). The price, spec and the hardware details are still unclear, but if (and that's quite a big if) they can be made to work at a reasonable price and be in the shops before Christmas it would give the Jaguar a decisive advantage over the rival Japanese systems – the Sega 32, Nintendo Project Reality and Sony PSX – which are all set for launch in 1995.

AND THE BAND PLAYED ON

SHOW REPORTS 1994

by Clive Parker

A packed Wembley Conference Centre was the venue for this years MEMS (MIDI and Electronic Music Show) with the Atari Falcon and *Cubase Audio* the centre of attention in the main hall.

Harman Audio organised hourly demonstrations of the direct-to-disk (D2D) capabilities of Steinberg's top of the range Atari Falcon software and hardware with professional musicians, general show followers, the press and the odd sad looking trainspotter in a blue tracksuit making up the mix of impressed onlookers. Crowds were also attracted to the Harman stand by daily raffles of hardware and other musical goodies, we even had a ticket.

Harman weren't the only Atari related exhibitors at MEMS, Hisoft/AVR/Microdeal were on hand selling ST samplers and *Clarity 16* for the Falcon – see the *Clarity 16* review on page 46 – and Robert Luneski of Oregon Research in the USA flew in to promote *Diamond Back 3*, the latest version of the hard drive backup software distributed in the UK by Hisoft.

"System Solutions were there in force with their usual range of powerful ST and Falcon hardware and software"

David Link and Tony Racine of Hisoft discuss their plans for world domination of the Atari market with Robert Luneski of Oregon Research.

HARDWARE EXPERTS

System Solutions were there in force with their usual range of powerful ST and Falcon hardware and software, apart from selling Falcons they were also selling new Mega STEs at £399 for a 2MByte machine without hard drive – stocks are strictly limited so give them a call to check availability.

The most exciting new item on the System Solutions stand was the *Desk Topper*, a low cost alternative to a tower case for just over £100. The *Desk Topper* is sold in two parts, the *Desk Topper* itself for £69.95 and the Freekeys keyboard kit for £39.95 – you actually need both parts so they should really be sold as one item. The kit is easy to assemble with a claimed time of 30 minutes, although if you add some of the other items such as a floppy drive kit, hard drive kit it will obviously take longer to build. Alongside this great hardware System Solutions were dis-

"In 30 minutes your Falcon or ST can look like this," says the advertising blurb on our desk. We agree, the *Desk Topper* is a brilliant piece of kit.

GOING BACK TO YOUR ROOTS

A new version of *Family Roots* has just been completed and is now on sale from Floppyshop. *Family Roots 2* is a complete re-write of the original genealogy program and has many improvements over the original version, it's much faster and you can now store details of 100,000 individuals – if you have a very large family! *Family Tree 2* costs £29.95 from Floppyshop, give them a call on ☎ 0224 312756.

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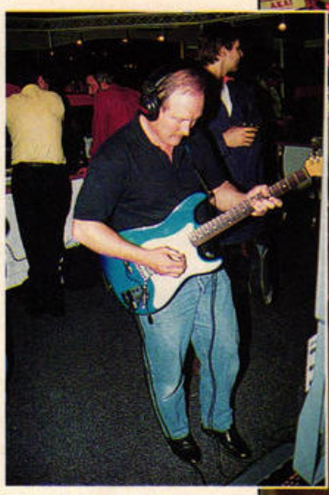

■ Standard guitars, MIDI guitars, effects units, keyboards and computers were all available for anyone to try out. Let's rock'n'roll with Colin!

playing – and selling – *Mag!x, Kobold 2,* hard drives, monitors and two new CD-ROM discs from Germany crammed full with loads of PD and Shareware for £29.95 each. Watch out for the CD-ROM reviews in *ST FORMAT* next month, call System Solutions are on ☎ 081 693 3355.

The rest of the show was the usual mix of Atari, PC and Mac compatible music hardware and software, with the Atari Falcon very prominent on may of the more general music "box shifter" stands and selling very well indeed. All the big music hardware firms were present with Roland, Korg and Yamaha displaying all their latest gear on huge stands. It was a great show for music and for Atari hardware and software.

■ The main hall was packed with stands and people, Atari hardware is still the most popular with musicians.

NEWCASTLE ATARI SHOW

SHOW REPORTS 1994

by Andy Curtis

Saturday 16 April saw Newcastle's first all Atari show. A host of companies made the effort to come up to Newcastle to raise the profile of serious Atari computing. Stacks of interesting software and hardware was on show but the real tragedy was that there just were not the people there to appreciate it. The local advertising really could have been handled a better, but as it was, many serious Atari enthusiasts were simply unaware of the show's existence.

"A host of companies made the effort to come up to Newcastle to raise the profile of serious Atari computing"

Compo Software were demonstrating the merits of the forthcoming *Neodesk 4,* which is now about 90% complete. The new features are impressive and the desktop system is designed to link in with *Geneva* (the multi-tasking system) better than ever before. Some of the *Geneva* code is now incorporated directly into *Neodesk,* including real-time window scrolling and 3D button effects. The Desktop's fully Falcon and TT compatible as well as running on the ST.

Other features include a dynamic grouping system which can express groups of files in one icon so, for example, if you wish to group all your .IMG files saved later than two days ago into one window, you can. Save this as a group icon and you can access these files whenever you wish. Colour icons are also supported on the Falcon and TT. The package is available in the USA in four to six weeks time, we may have to wait a little longer. In the meantime, if you buy Neodesk 3 from Compo Software it

OVER THE RAINBOW

Rainbow is a brand new, low cost true colour art program for the Falcon030 enabling you to get the most from the Falcon's superb graphical capabilities.

Priced at a bargain £29.95, *Rainbow* has many features not found in more expensive software such as a built-in photo studio, multiple palettes, up to drawing 80 tools, Tabby support and the ability to change screen resolutions from within the software without losing picture data. Drivers for the Tabby graphics tablet are built into *Rainbow* so you don't have to install the original Tabby drivers. You can get *Rainbow* from JCA Europe on ☎ 0734 452416.

■ Shades of *Jurassic Park!* Create stunning true colour pictures on your Falcon using *Rainbow,* the new art package from JCA Europe.

CANNON FODDER CAVALRY

Stuck on *Cannon Fodder?* Rest easy soldier, there's now an official *Cannon Fodder* Playing Guide. Compiled by Sensible Software and Future's own wonder war-head Cam Winstanley and costs a mere £9.95. Telling you everything you'll ever need (or want) to know about killing pixel warriors it's got general tips, maps and specific instructions for each mission, this books a must for all mouse-driven generals. The official *Cannon Fodder* Playing Guide is available from all good computer bookshops or direct from us here at Future. Call ☎ 0225 822511 for full details on how to order.

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STEINBERG GET SERIOUS

It only seems like a couple of months since Cubase Audio for the Falcon stunned the music world with it's impressive D2D capabilities – see the review in STF 56, see page 92 if you missed it – and there's already a 16-track version available.

Cubase Audio 16 enables you to record 16 tracks of digital audio on your Falcon and is packed with a loads of other features including 128 MIDI tracks, auto analog compression, ten-band graphic equaliser, cross fading and reversing of digital audio, four stereo subgroups for the FA-8 expander and linking of stereo samples for editing. The only drawback to the new version is that equaliser and reverb functions are disabled in 16-track mode. The price for the new version is £799, call Harman Audio for details of upgrading from the 8-track version. A gigantic hard drive is recommended.

The FA-8 is a hardware expansion for the Falcon that plugs into the DSP port enabling eight digital tracks to be output from the Falcon, these can be patched straight into your external mixing board or passed through an external effects unit. The FA-8 features a DSP through port enabling other DSP add-ons such as the FDI (Falcon Digital Interface) to be used at the same time. The FA-8 is expected to sell for around £300, call Harman Audio for current prices.

■ The constantly crowded Harman Audio stand silenced Mac and PC musicians with the real-time demonstrations of D2D recording on the Falcon030.

comes with a free upgrade to *Neodesk 4* when it arrives.

Titan Designs were demonstrating the *Expose!* 24-bit colour digitiser on the Falcon. The results are superb. Pin sharp 256 colour grabs from a video camera and a lightning fast zoom function that made a few people's jaws drop. Pictures can be saved in 24-bit TARGA format. The system isn't available yet on UK market, but check out the preview on page 18 for an idea of its potential.

CGS ComputerBild were demonstrating *Quill* – reviewed in *STF* 59, check out page 92 if you missed that issue – the Tabby-based art package designed to make doodling easy on the ST. Signing your name using a Tabby is easier than you might think, thanks to this nifty new utility.

The big story of the show was the release of *Mag!X,* the new multi-tasking operating system from Germany which completely overwrites TOS and replaces it with its own blisteringly fast code. At the time of the show the program had been on UK release for just 12 hours but the staff at System Solu-

WHERE TO GO SILICON SHOPPING

Silica Shops, the new retail chain, which boasts a dedicated Atari section, have now opened. As reported last month there are now 20 stores nationwide. Now the full list has become available, they are: London (Oxford Street, Selfridges), London (Tottenham Court Road), Sidcup, Croydon (Debenhams), Southend (Keddies), Ipswich (Debenhams), Manchester (Debenhams), Chelmsford (Debenhams), Glasgow (Debenhams), Guilford (Debenhams), Southampton (Debenhams), Bristol (Debenhams), Sheffield (Debenhams), Luton (Debenhams), Plymouth (Debenhams), Hull (Debenhams), Harrow (Debenhams) and Romford (Debenhams). So get down there and see what they've got.

ST FORMAT

THE SIZE OF IT

■ 200 MBytes of data on four disks? Impossible? These disks already exist. They are CD's and they're already available for the ST and Falcon

■ CD-ROM is the latest computing buzzword, but is this really the revolutionary next step for the ST or are CD's just jumped up hard drives? The hope is separated from the hype in next month's *ST FORMAT!*

PLUS!

■ Beginners guide to TOS 2. Your operating explained - in English

■ A step-by-step guide Cover Disk tutorial for *Music Mon 2*

■ Reviews of the latest ST software :

■ *3D Calc* spreadsheet - the number cruncher you've been looking for?

■ *Kobold* - the blindingly fast new file transfer system

■ *Diamond Back 3* - Hisoft's latest hard drive backup system.

■ And a Cover Disk, features that will change your ST forever!

NEXT ISSUE OUT ON TUESDAY 5 JULY

tions already had it working beautifully on a TT. This system is the most comprehensive multi-tasker seen on the ST yet. In single tasking mode it runs programs significantly faster than TOS on an 8MHz ST. Even in multi-tasking mode, running a desktop clock, memory watch program, word processor and archiver don't slow the machine down drastically. The system comes with its own Desktop called *MagXdesk* which is functional if none too impressive. The arrival of *Ease* Desktop in June provides *Mag!X* users with an environment which "Wipes the floor with *Neodesk,*" according to Karl Brandt of System Solutions. A claim we can't wait to test.

Another amazing program from Germany is *Kobold* which copies files at speeds that beggars belief. Copying files between partitions of a hard disk we transferred 1.2MBytes to another partition in under five seconds, the same folder was then deleted from the destination drive in under a second. *Kobold* also has disk copy and format routines built in. Best of all *Kobold* links up with the *Ease* Desktop, so that when you initiate a Desktop copy or format *Kobold* does it for you in a fraction of the time. *Kobold* will cost £59.95, *Mag!X* costs £69.95 but you can buy it with an advance order on *Ease* for £99.

There were a lot of Falcons and TTs on display at this show and many of the people demonstrating programs were keen to tell us how well their programs ran on the ST. It would, however, have been nicer if they'd actually brought ST's along so we could see for ourselves. For a small show there was an awful lot to see and talk about. It's just a real shame that more Atari enthusiasts couldn't have been there.

AND THIS MONTH...

This month finds us in the oddly satisfying yet alarmingly frustrating position of having too many Jaguar games to feature, which means that three previews – *Doom, Club Drive* and *Brutal Sports Football* – have been postponed until next issue. *Club Drive* is pitched as *"Hard Drivin' meets Micro Machines"* and sees you zooming in a tiny car around a house, an Old Western town and (apparently) the full street map of San Francisco. *Brutal Sports Football* is mediaeval *Speedball 2*, and *Doom* is, well, *Doom*, but on the Jaguar. The version we've seen is the notorious overnight PC port, and runs at maybe one animation frame in ten, but the detail is astonishing, and that's before using the machine's extra 65,000 colours. It's going to be *T2K* all over again.

As cursed over last issue, the games seen at the ECTS – *Wolfenstein, Flashback* and *Kasumi Ninja* – appeared in glorious fuller-o-vision too late for our previews. The first two games are all but finished, with *Wolfenstein* in the very final stages of playtesting, and *Kasumi's* coming along very nicely, thankyouforasking.

Even more people

101 software developers have now signed up with Atari. That's almost enough to expect some games to start appearing. Latest publishers spending vast amounts of their investors' money as an excuse to get hold of complimentary copies of *T2K* include Entertainment International and coin-op manufacturers Jaleco of *St Dragon, Silkworm, Rodland, Big Run* and lots of others we temporarily can't recall fame.

■ It's *Doom*. But on the Jaguar. We're so excited we can barely contain ourselves. A bit like this cannon fodder zombie, really. O-ho.

COMMODORE NO MORE?

Atari's long-term rival Commodore has finally called it a day, sort of. Commodore International Ltd is no longer in business and its assets have been transferred to trustees, while its major subsidiary Commodore Electronics Ltd has entered voluntary liquidation. This was not Commodore UK, or even US though; the future of these parts of the branches is not clear as there may well be buyers for these more profitable sections of the company. Is the end of Commodore as we know them? Well yes, but almost certainly not the end of the Amiga or Commodore – as old computer companies never die, they just get merged away.

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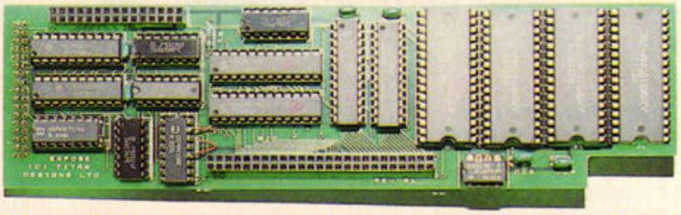
IN LIVING COLOUR

Exposé is ideal for those 30 second TV ads.

The first video digitiser for the Falcon is almost ready to go on sale, Clive Parker trekked north to Titan Designs for this exclusive preview of Exposé


A smart looking piece of engineering by any standards, the Exposé board fits snugly into the Falcon's internal expansion slot.

Exposé is the first true colour video digitiser for the Falcon enabling high resolution video grabs to be made in real-time.

The Exposé hardware plugs into the Falcon's internal expansion slot and the TV input connection is brought out of the Falcon near the cartridge port, this is because the Falcon is sadly lacking in external upgrade ports. It seems a pity that a computer with the Falcon's inherent abilities is crippled in this way, forcing any expanison card that needs a direct path to the outside world to take a Heath Robinson approach and have wire dangling out of any available orofice. Anyway, that's enough whining about the Falcon.

Exposed at last

The Exposé digitiser is going to have its own dedicated software supplied with it, until this software is ready Exposé is being tested using a version of *Chroma Studio 24* with the hardware. *Chroma* has Exposé compatibility built-in this means that anyone who buys Exposé can automatically use most powerful 24-bit graphics and animation application for the Falcon. What a powerful combination! Titan Designs' own software is set to include similar functions of *Chroma Studio.*

Chroma Studio 24 fully supports the Exposé digitiser so we used it for the preview, after selecting the Exposé icon you are presented with four more icons enabling you to use Exposé to it's full potential. You can grab from video or a camera using either direct grabs or interlaced grabs. The quickest way to get direct grabs is to digitise them at a resolution of 256x160 pixels, you can grab directly in real time at a very high frame rate. You can also grab interlaced images at 512x512 pixels, this is scaled down to 512x380 to give the correct aspect ratio on screen.

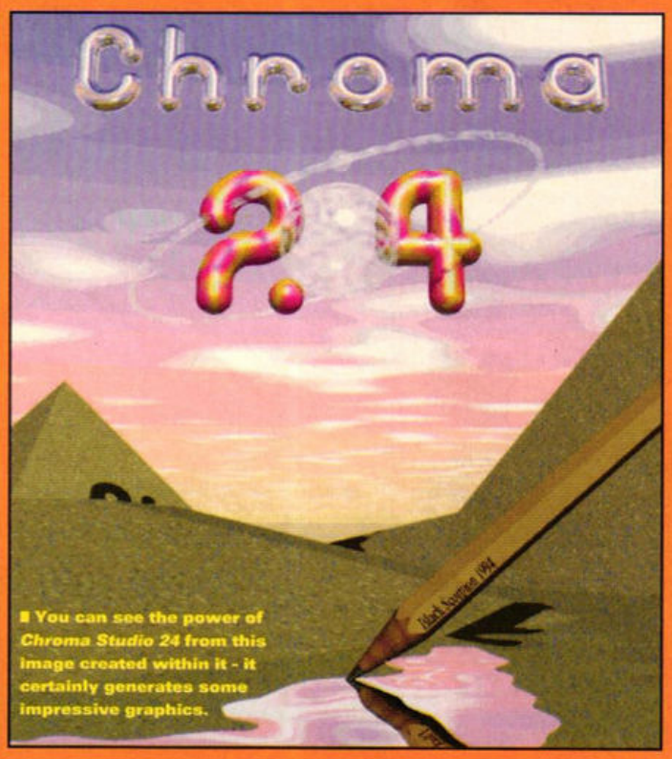
> **"Expose is the first true colour digitiser for the Falcon"**

Using *Chroma Studio* with a screen size of 320x200 pixels on a VGA monitor the grabbed image is displayed using *Chroma Studio*'s "force fit" feature, the 512x380 image is dithered slightly to actually give a slightly better image and crammed into the current resolution. The interlaced and forced fit versions of the images take slightly longer to grab than when direct mode is used, but the resulting picture has much more detail than the normal un-interlaced picture.

CHROMA STUDIO 24

Chroma Studio 24 is still under development with the final polish being put on the software. Each version that appears has more added bells and whistles, the latest version we've seen has an excellent information window with a 24-bit animation running in it

Chroma's info window with the animation running, it's features like these that make *Chroma* stand out from the crowd and give it a very professional feel.



You can see the power of *Chroma Studio 24* from this image created within it - it certainly generates some impressive graphics.

Taken by surprise, our ace reporter has a refreshing cup of coffee.

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OTHER TITAN DESIGNS

Titan Designs are doing much more than just produce a video digitiser for the Falcon, their Graffiti Genlock is now being distributed along with the Improv Pro titling and animation software package – a version of *Improv* is bundled with the Graffiti genlock.

Titan Designs' Graffiti Genlock is now on available, this deceptive little black box is just bursting with features enabling you to mix computer graphics and video.

Pip-pip chaps

Exposé takes advantage of *Chroma Studio*'s ability to display a small live image from the video source at the top left of the screen, this enables you to watch a picture-in-picture (PIP) preview in real-time so you can set up the camera or find your place on a video tape before you start grabbing images.

Each Exposé icon with a little box in the corner has a sub-menu of options enabling you to create different grabs and effects using that particular function. Features include various "multiple exposure" effects, the ability to grab 24-bit colour images and resolution enhancement to 1,024x768 pixels using the digitiser hardware.

For practical purposes most people would actually use the 512 by 380 resolution for day to day digitising, the main problem with generating a 24-bit image is that the source must be a still frame, an inanimate object or the subject must stand very still.

When using the 24-bit option a grab takes three or four seconds to generate with the final grab looks very similar to a 16-bit grab – the big difference comes when you study the picture carefully. Edges of objects are much more sharply defined and colours look much richer on screen. The true test is when you increase the level of zoom and the image still looks very sharp, pixelisation is drastically reduced resulting in a far higher standard of grab. This kind of picture quality is ideal for using a rostrum camera to grab 24-bit images at a resolution of 1,024x768 pixels – brilliant quality for video hardware at this price.

Animated discussion

You can, of course, use any of *Chroma Studio 24*'s functions on the images you grab – you could take a couple of grabs of two poeple and create a 24-bit colour morph between them using the morphing studio. All kinds of distortion effects can be used on images along with the ability to use grabs – or parts of grabs – as brushes or masks.

Animations can be created in real-time using Exposé at various speeds and resolutions ranging from large images at seven frames per second to small images at 25 frames per second. The list below outlines the four basic animation resolutions and speeds of the Exposé and *Chroma Studio* combination.

512x380 at seven frames per second
512x256 at ten frames per second
256x160 at 17 frames per second
128x80 at 25 frames per second

All grabbing for animations is performed in real-time with the length of the animation dependant on the amout of memory installed in the Falcon – a minimum of 4MBytes is needed but if you want to really get to grips with animation then you should go the whole hog and get a 16MByte board in your Falcon. We know it's expensive, but hey! It's only money!

"Edges of objects are much more sharply defined and colours look much richer on-screen"

Black Scorpion Software are hard at work on the finishing touches to *Chroma Studio 24*.

You can save your Exposé animations to hard drive in FLI format so they can be played back using a standard FLI player. Again, the bigger your hard drive the more animations you can create and save.

Phenomenal

Even more features are being added to the package, imagine a rotating cube on screen with live real-time video mapped on to each face of the cube – it's been done. This is just one of several new features being added to the latest version of the software, and with the way that the software and hardware complement each other Exposé looks like it's set to take the Falcon Desktop Video world by storm.

We can't wait to get our hands on the finished version, watch out for the definitive review coming soon in *ST FORMAT*. **stf**

In this blatant plug for the best ST mag around, you can see the PIP (picture-in-picture) feature of *Chroma Studio 24* in action with "Snapper" Parker displayed in the small window at the top left of the screen.

GETTING EXPOSED

You can order the Exposé digitiser from Titan Designs for £299, give them a ring on ☎ 021 414 1630 if you're interested.

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THE NEW WAVE

Discover how talented Atari fans are going to revitalise your ST. We reveal the new wave of ST games and show you how to wire up a hard drive to your ST. No, hang on

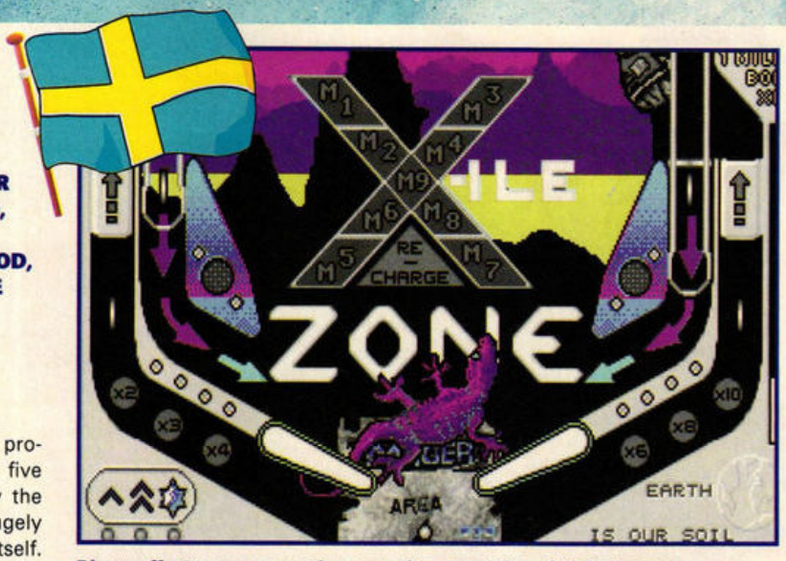
No one pretends that the current state of ST games is anything to crow about. With an eye on only the profit margin, the big buck developers and mainstream publishers have moved on to other platforms, leaving the STFM exhausted, the STE scandalously underused, and the Falcon practically untouched. But the loss of the big guns has had an unexpected and attractive effect. The way is now clear for independent software houses to step in, and with most composed of long-term Atari fans who have decided to turn their years of tinkering and research into commercial games, the results for you are all the better. Put it this way – would you prefer to see a game that uses your ST to the full, or another shamefully bug-ridden, blasé disaster like *Goal?*

ST FORMAT has been talking to the independents of today who are going to be the major players of tomorrow. Each company discussed where the ST is going, what they think of the machines, how they view today's games, what they're working on at the moment and how you are going to benefit.

One thing that is apparent is these companies believe strongly in their games, and in the ST. These are people who see the ST and family as good machines worth writing for and, better still, they have the ideas and talent to exploit them to their full potential. Even discounting the breathless hype, you can see these are going to be games worth playing.

UNIQUE DEVELOPMENTS

COMPANY: UNIQUE DEVELOPMENTS
HOME BASE: SWEDEN
MEMBERS: SEVEN
GAME: OBSESSION
(A PINBALL GAME; BY PETER ZETTERBERG, PER ALMERED, TORD JANSSON, MICHAEL BRUNNSTRÖM, HANS HARROD, JIMMY GUSTAVSSON, KALLE LUNDQVIST)
IN THE HOT SEAT: PETER ZETTERBERG, MD



In an effort to spruce up the general presentation of pinball games, *Obsession* eschews the passé silver ball in favour of a giant purple lizard.

Background

Peter Zetterberg has been programming the ST for about five years, after being stunned by the graphics of Barbarian and hugely disappointed with the game itself. Starting with *STOS*, he's progressed via *GFA Basic* to Assembler and his favourite, C. His previous games include *Smash Hit, Mega Line* and *Laser Chase 2000* – all Shareware or Postcardware productions. Zetterberg formed Unique with Michael Brunnström as the idea of making money from something they liked to do was rather appealing.

Thoughts on the ST and family

"The ST is alive and kicking on the PD and Shareware market. Commercially... well, many publishers have withdrawn from the market, but that doesn't mean everyone with an ST suddenly doesn't want software for it. *STF* is still being published, and we're establishing ourselves with the ST. The STE is a fantastic piece of hardware, and we're using its capabilities to the maximum. We are now beginning to see the limits of what the STE can do, and that's taken five years.

"The Falcon is a very powerful computer indeed, but we have yet to wait a few years to see what it really can do. It always takes a few years for programmers to exploit fully a new computer. The ST family will be around for at least three or four years."

"The ST is great. It's a totally unbelievable machine" Bloodhouse

Thoughts on the game industry

"Take a game by a well-known software house. It's on CD, and is supposed to be the game of the century. The presentation really gave me a slap in the face (wow!) but the gameplay sucks. You are running around these fancy brain corridors, shooting at what looks like mutated tea cups and hair mustard cans. The bigger developers have lost it all. They put profit before quality. They can't even spell "game," or "fun." Presentation is important, but gameplay must never suffer because of it. We are in this business to make games that are fun to play.

"We're not wasting resources on the packaging, either. We're going to have our game in a cheap paper box, maybe three colours. We can't compete against *Legends Of Valour*-type packaging, but you're supposed to pay for the contents, the game, and not for its box."

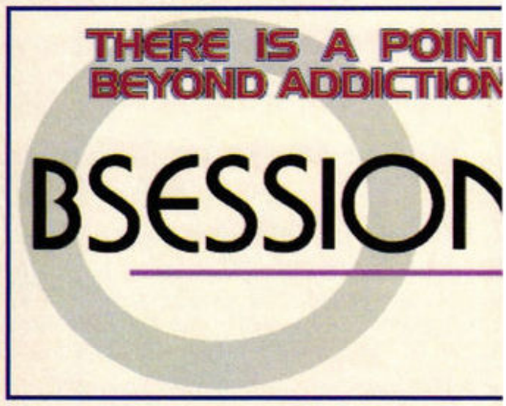
Obsession

"The idea behind *Obsession* is simply that the best pinball game, *Pinball Dreams*, is available only on the Amiga. We started to design a very simple pinball game, but the project expanded. We decided on a no compromises approach; to make the STE game of the century.

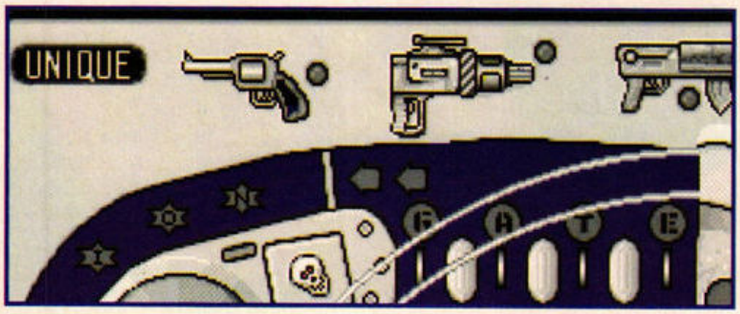
"It's going to be a milestone on the Atari road. Never before has a game pushed the good old STE so far. Blitter chip usage, 25KHz five-channel stereo music and effects, 32plus colours on-screen, hardware scrolling, 336x265 resolution graphics... "

What next?

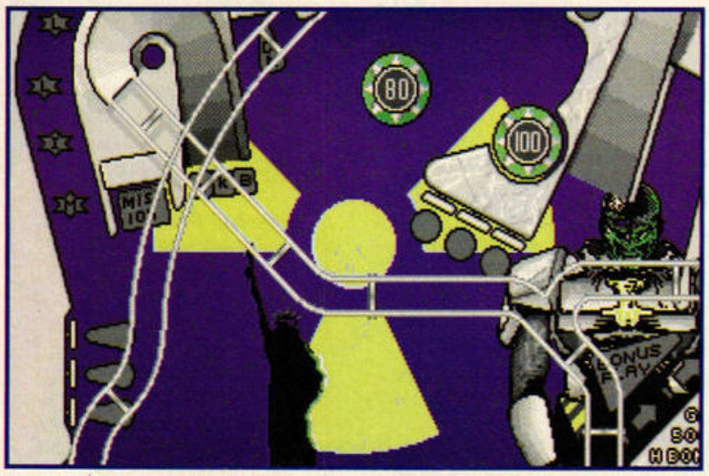
"More games that push the STE to its limits, naturally. *Jack the Ripper*, a platform game, is coming in December, followed by *Cyberdome*, a shoot-'em-up, in January. And, of course, there's the October release of the Falcon version of *Obsession*. That's going to be huge. You need 4MBytes of RAM to play it, and it's got 256 colours and everything."



The really strangely Calvin Klein-like box art. You can almost hear the breathy voice murmuring the slogan then accepting a large amount of money.



Very probably the top of the table. Look, we don't exercise any control over which screenshots the companies deign to send to us, you know.

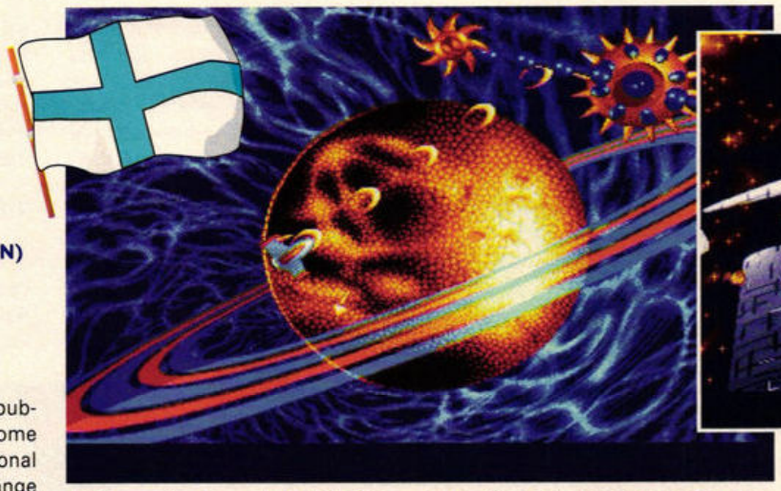


It really is all very *Pinball Dreams*, isn't it? Almost as *Dreams* itself would have looked if 21st Century had bothered releasing it on the ST, for example.

www.stformat.com

BLOODHOUSE

COMPANY: BLOODHOUSE
HOME BASE: FINLAND
MEMBERS: ABOUT 15.
GAMES: STARDUST (AN ASTEROIDS TYPE; STE CONVERSION BY TOMI KIVELA AND RENE KIVIOJA), UTOPOS 2 (A THRUST/OIDS TYPE; STE AND FALCON VERSIONS BY JANI PENTTINEN)
IN THE HOT SEAT: PETTERI PUTKONEN AND JANI PENTTINEN



Saturn actually exploded in 1926, you know. It's just taken this long for the light to reach us. This is completely true.

Visit strange and exciting new worlds... *and then blow them up!* Ah, *Mega-Apocalypse*. It was terrible.

Background

Once, there were no software publishers in Finland. Then some demo coders and professional game players decided to change the situation, and *Bloodhouse* was born. Basically.

Thoughts on the ST and family

"The ST is great. It's a totally unbelievable machine. We bought our STs five years ago, and have been hooked ever since. Unfortunately, we can't say the same about the Falcon. There's nothing wrong with the hardware (although it should have been more powerful) but the major problem is still Atari itself. They don't seem to want the Falcon to succeed. It's sold well, though, and we support it. The Jaguar seems promising. We believe this machine is going to put Atari back on its feet.

"The ST may not be selling so well any more, but there is still a strong user base. We believe that although the game market is getting smaller, it is going to be fairly strong for quality games for at least a couple of years."

Thoughts on the game industry

"Nowadays, people tend to judge a game by its looks, rather than the way it feels and plays. Now that CD-based games are becoming more common, most developers seem to get carried away with the graphics. What's on offer is a bunch of modern day *Dragon's Lairs*, which isn't very promising. The playability is always going to be the most important factor, which is we like games such as *Turrican 2, SWIV, Doom,* and ST *Dungeon Master*. It's what we're doing with *Stardust* and *Utopos* – taking a perfectly working idea, adding to it and updating the visuals. They prove the old ideas are still the best ones."

Stardust and Utopos

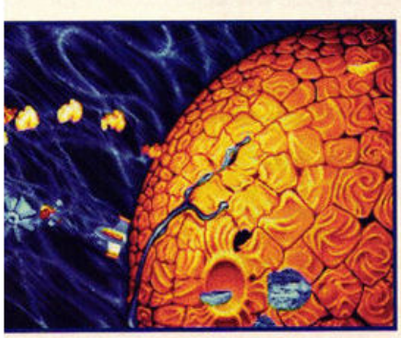
"The programming's been done by Aggression, which is an independent crew of coders, graphic artists and musicians, who all have a STE demo scene background, producing such demos as *Overdose* and *Brain Damage*. *Stardust*, a conversion of the Amiga original, is almost identical to that version, and some features are looking even better. It's got the biggest sprites ever seen on any ST game. The Falcon version of *Utopos 2* is going to beat the A1200 version; it's got 16-bit sound and true colour graphics.

"We strongly believe in giving full support to the STE and the Falcon's capabilities. We still love the ST and we really want to make good games for it."

What next?

"We'd love to continue working on the ST, but it really depends on how well *Stardust* and *Utopos 2* sell. We have plans for an ultrafast platformer, provisionally titled Elvis, but that's still in the very earliest stages of development. It's got a lizard in it."

Stardust's Well of Poles. Now that's quite clever – it's a sort of pun on Well of Souls. Do you see?



It genuinely is a glorious-looking game. Basically.

LOCAL BOY MAKES GOOD

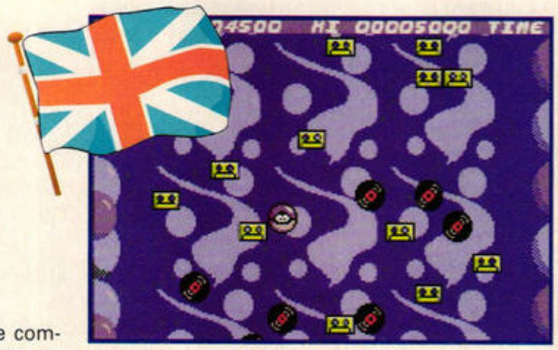
You can't talk about independent software houses without mentioning Jeff Minter. The man's been doing his own thing for years, taking a genuine delight in writing games and upsetting the majors' view that "interactive movies" are the way forward with intensely playable releases like *Llamatron* and the Jaguar-shifter *Tempest 2000*. Like Bloodhouse's games, Minter's take established game types and then blasts them into the 21st century, or something equally trite. Currently working on a sound-to-light synthesiser for the Jaguar CD-ROM, with his next game rumoured to be *Star Raiders 2000*, Minter's the textbook example of an individual programmer embarrassing huge development teams by cunningly using talent and good ideas. Stick at it: it could be you up there one day...

Jeff hasn't really shaved off his gargantuan beard. It's actually a sophisticated fake for Tuesday.

www.stformat.com

CASPIAN SOFTWARE

COMPANY: CASPIAN SOFTWARE
MEMBERS: THREE CORE, LOTS OF FREELANCE
HOME BASE: BRITAIN
GAME: ROCK 'N' ROLL CLAMS (*STF* 59, 72%), ZERO-5
IN THE HOT SEAT: CHRIS DILLON, MD



Reccord, the noun, but reecord the verb. Makes you think, really.

Background

Caspian is an Atari-exclusive company, formed in August 1993 by long-standing Atari fans.

Thoughts on the ST and family

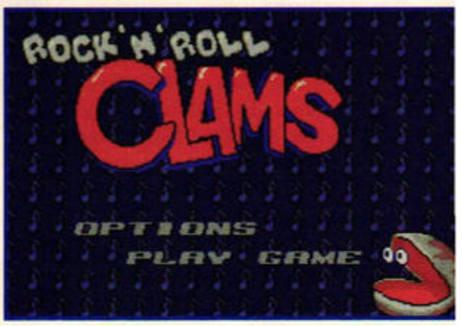
"The word to describe the ST family is definitely underappreciated. They're very good machines: good value and with clean architecture. They're fun machines that enable you to be creative. You can have a go with a ST. Publishers really haven't realised their potential – the user base is huge, and, unlike Commodore, Atari's still exporting machines to America and Europe."

Thoughts on the game industry

"FMV is crap. CD-ROM is crap. As forms of storage, they're OK – it's just that nobody's managed to work out what to do with the games. You need to get the gameplay right first, and then add all these flashy effects. Sadly, gameplay has fallen by the wayside. Publishers have to sit down and work out what makes a game before looking at the graphics: bake the cake, then put the icing on top."

Zero-5

"It's incredible. It's good. It's a polygon shoot-'em-up set in space. We've got all sorts of tricks, like using the blitter, to get it up to speed. It's very playable. As with *Rock 'n' Roll Clams,* Falcon and STE owners get the full benefit of their extra capabilities. More so, in fact – *Zero-5* checks for things like accelerator boards and adapts them accordingly. But you can read all about it in our work-in-progress series starting in next month's issue o f *ST FORMAT.*"



Only the most gibbering of lunatics would need a caption to explain this.

What next?

"We've got a couple of ST games in the pipeline. They're bigger and better than even *Zero-5*... Caspian Software are going to be around for years to come."

FUSION DESIGNS

COMPANY: FUSION DESIGNS
MEMBERS: TWO
HOME BASE: THE NETHERLANDS
GAME: SPHERICAL (PLATFORM GAME; BY C SPRUYT AND E ZANDBOER)

Can't say we care much for this Music of the Spheres. A bit bongy, really, and when you get to a drum break they just shatter dangerously.

If those monsters are meant to be oversized stomachs - it's not funny.

Background

"Fusion are the classical fans-turned-programmers company. They started *Spherical* two years ago, and have been programming the game in the spare hours between studying. Now almost finished, they plan to publish the game themselves."

Thoughts on the game industry

"We're disappointed with the industry. We wanted to have *Spherical* published by an established software house but those we approached weren't interested. The disappointing thing is that the rejection letters were so unhelpful. The software companies complain about the lack of new programmers – how can they expect to attract people if they are so unhelpful? We've put too much work into the game to see it go to waste, so we're publishing it ourselves.

"We aren't impressed by what's being done at the moment on CD. Our favourite games are things like the Bitmap Brothers' *The Chaos Engine, Gods* and *Speedball 2*: good, solid games with plenty of attention to detail. That's what makes a game – a good idea, and the details."

Spherical

"We're very proud of our work on *Spherical.* The gameplay is "there," and the graphical style is very different from that of any other game. We use balls to make up the sprites, which means the characters are very flexible."

What next?

"After you have been working on something for two years, only to be disappointed... We don't know. When we started writing *Spherical,* we obviously didn't know what was going to happen to the Atari ST market. We want to do more, but..."

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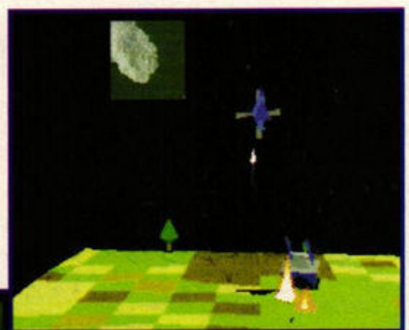
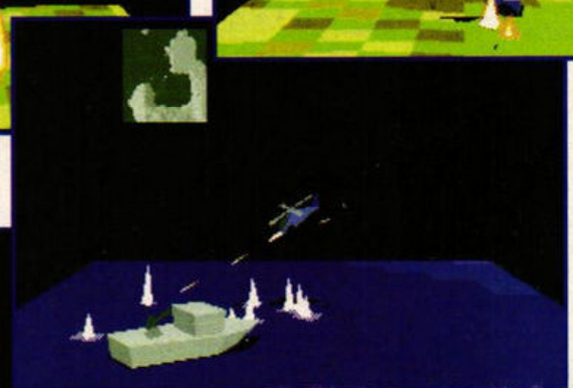
BINARY ASYLUM

COMPANY: BINARY ASYLUM
HOME BASE: BRITAIN
MEMBERS: THREE
GAME: ZEEWOLF (A 3D SHOOT-'EM-UP; BY ANDY WILTON AND JIM GARDNER, AND BOB WADE AND ANDY SMITH)
IN THE HOT SEAT: ANDY SMITH, PR MANAGER

Taste the swiftly accurate nuke of democracy, foul patchworked quilt.



The Leopard 2 tank has no hatches as such. Crews are welded in for their entire tour of duty. True.



Amiga shots, but we should see similar. Or else, eh?

Helicopters can't go backwards, you know. Or is it fish?

Background

Binary Asylum consists of three ex-journalist folk and two professional programmers, some of whom are the same people.

Thoughts on the ST and family

"Although the ST family isn't as glamorous in 1994 as it was in 1987, the machine has been selling for some eight years, and that equates to a large user base. The struggle for which new platforms are going to succeed has yet to happen, so you can't consider any machine dead which has a large user base. Once there are no professionally-published magazines dedicated to a machine on the newsagents' shelves, only then can you consider it dead.

"When we first thought of starting a software house, back in the days of *ACE* magazine, the plan was to write for the ST and then port to the Amiga. The ST is a great machine that we all enjoy using."

Thoughts on the game industry

"An "interactive movie" isn't a game, it's a waste of money. Flashy presentation is all well and good in a game, but it shouldn't be the whole of the game. Yes, there are plenty of terrible "classic" games, but they don't cost £60 a pop. Obviously people's game tastes vary, which is why we're not going to bother trying to produce a game that everyone's going to like – it can't be done. We're planning to produce the sort of games we actually like playing ourselves. We just happen to think our tastes are pretty much in line with every other discerning gameplayer."

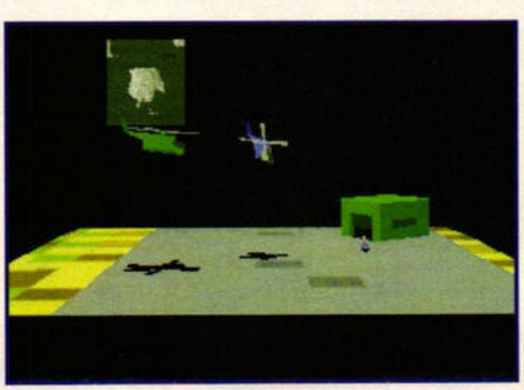
Zeewolf

"Zeewolf is a thrilling, single-player, polygon-based 3D helicopter combat game. It's not going to revolutionise the world, it's going to be a good, solid game that's fun and exciting to play for more than an hour. And we're writing it for the ST because we want to. Because we're an independent company, we can do what versions we like. We're using a standard-sized box for the packaging – these aren't as wasteful as some of the earlier monstrosities some publishers came up with. You have to be eye-catching.

There won't be Falcon and STE-enhanced versions because we've actually managed to fit the 3D polygon engine in a basic 512K machine, and we want *Zeewolf* to be available to as many ST owners as possible. The game is fast and colourful enough on a basic machine and we don't really see the need to add extra features that only some gameplayers could enjoy. It's the gameplay that matters, and we have therefore made sure the gameplay is top-notch on a basic machine."

What next?

"We intend to publish three or four games per year of equal and higher quality to *Zeewolf,* so we can concentrate our energies on getting the games and gameplay right rather than get caught up publishing for publishing's sake." ***stf***



Save people, *Choplifter* style. And not shoot

REACH FOR THE STARS

If you want to chance your arm at publishing games, you could do worse than follow *Bloodhouse's* example and start on the PD and Shareware circuit. You won't be expected to top *Llamatron* with your first *STOS* effort but it's a good opportunity to develop your programming skills, get feedback from gameplayers, and attract talent to your group. Then, with a few releases under your belt, you're ready to take the plunge and go all the way. Not that it's going to be easy mind you: as you can see from Fusion's example, you have to bite down and be prepared for disappointment as publishers ignore you completely (the fools).

Chris Dillon of Caspian dispenses valuable advice. "You have to be prepared to put in long hours without much return. Be professional. Crash-proof your program, and make sure you pay attention to the details. And contact us if you've got a fantastic game..." The scamp.

Dillon: master of the blatant plug and shameless self-promotion.

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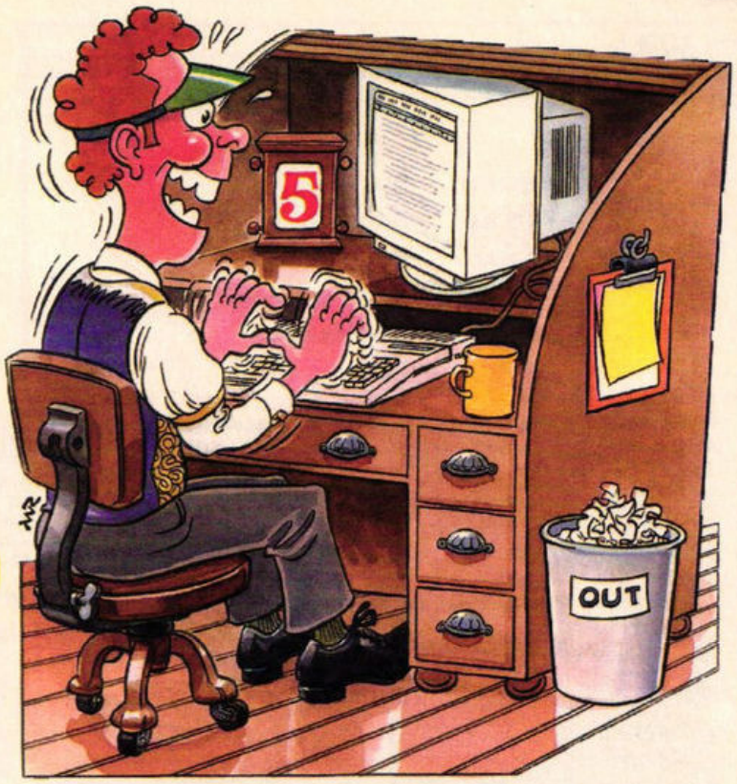
THE TYPE CAST



Want a word processor? What should you actually look for? Check out Peter Crush's guide to the stars of WP stage

Word Processing is the most popular "serious' activity of STF readers, running a close second to games, with over 50% of you primarily using the ST for word crunching.

Yet, while every month the very best games are rated, how do you know which word processor to pick? If you're just getting started or already have a word processor and are eager to upgrade or even just want to know what other programs are available – then read on. This is the hottest guide to the most essential word processing packages available for the ST today. The cost, the features, the memory requirements, the works. Every facet of every leading word processor is detailed and debated.

It's not difficult to see why word processing is so popular on the ST, it's the ideal computer for cost-effective, quality, document preparation. There are a host of ST programs that enable you to process your words – from simple inexpensive text-only ones to state-of-the-art software that uses fancy fonts and graphics – enabling you to generate smart looking letters, school or college projects and CVs with ease.

So what's the best program? There's no straight answer, it all depends what you want to do and the kinds of documents you want to produce so it's essential to carefully considering precisely which features you'll need in a word processor before you buy. The various features in the three categories of PD, Commercial WP and document processor all overlap to a degree, so read the reviews, sort out your priorities and check out the important facts for comparison.

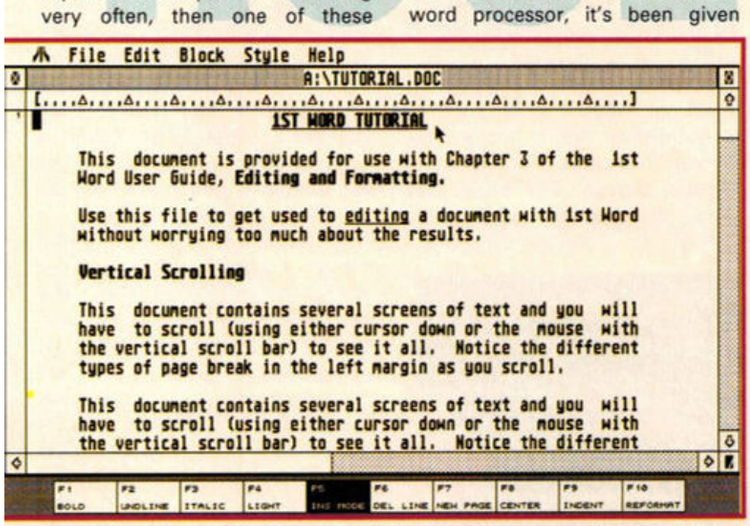
Public Domain WPs

Are cheap Public Domain word processors any good? After all, you can pay up to £150 for the latest commercial DP for your ST so what can you reasonably expect for a couple of quid? Actually, PD word processors are pretty capable, and if you don't use your ST for writing very often, then one of these maybe all you need. They're fine for occasional writing tasks and are ideal WP's for beginners. You'll find lots of Public Domain WPs and text editors around, but we've picked out the best ones – both old and new – below.

1st Word

1st Word is the best known ST word processor, it's been given away with nearly every ST sold. Written to take full advantage of GEM, it sports multiple windows, scroll bars and drop-down menus. Considering how old *1st Word* is it performs admirably, and many other ST word processors import text in *1st Word* format.

The ST's function keys control the program's operations, like <F10> which re-formats your text to a new width, and changes from say a ragged right to a justified right-hand margin. The screen display is WYSIWYG – "what you see is what you get" – which is one of the major benefits for novices. Although the program seems light on features nowadays, there are plenty of PD utilities for counting words and spell checking. Such facilities are not built into *1st Word*, but the stand-alone extras provide a similar effect. See FaST Club's catalogue or check other Public Domain libraries for such support disks. If you're not heavily into writing, *1st Word* is probably suitable for your needs.



■ The manual for *1st Word* is on the disk, so load it and read it! It does all the basic things a WP should do, it's a proper little GEM (groan)!

1st Word

(Disk WP100) PD prices, FaST Club
☎ 0602 455250

Highs
- Dead simple to use.
- Stable, no-nonsense program.

Lows
- A bit limited if you want more features.

80%

ST Writer Elite

ST Writer Elite is the other well known PD word processor for the ST and is almost as venerable as 1st Word. Originally it was not GEM driven, but now it boasts a full menus and mouse control interface alongside all its old keyboard commands. Having said that, it's not a proper GEM program and looking at it now, it's hard to see why it was so popular.

It's certainly very much faster to use than *1st Word*, and can provide you with white text on a black background rather like *Protext*. This gives *ST Writer* a professional look, and with its ability to produce ASCII text caused some ST journalists to use

page

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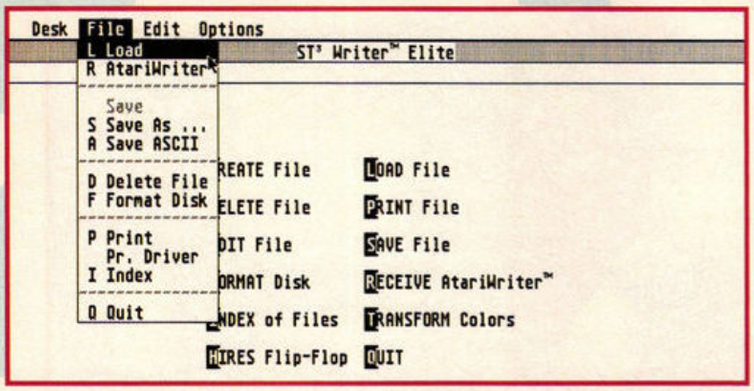


It's all a little bit sparse really, and there are lots of other PD word processors prettier than this, but it does the job well, so who cares?

his for their own magazine writing in the early days. The latest version comes complete with even more features, and runs on any ST. The disk includes Spanish and German versions of the program, plus help files and details of how to use the software. It has a non-standard interface so you'll either love *ST Writer* or hate it – but then at PD prices you can afford to check it out without breaking the piggy-bank.

ST Writer Elite

(Disk GD17) PD prices, Goodman International
☎ 0782 335650

Highs
- Quicker than *1st Word.*

Lows
- Unusual interface.

75%

DB Writer

DB Writer is a much newer WP in the Public Domain, and is the most feature-packed PD WP going. It runs on a 520ST, but if you want to use its dictionary and thesaurus facilities (yup – PD with a dictionary and thesaurus!) you need 1MByte of RAM. Also available from Goodmans is a support disk (GD1673) which contains extra dictionary files of technical and foreign words.

DB Writer is quite fast in use, with its slick menu and keyboard shortcuts driven interface. But like *ST Writer Elite,* this isn't a proper GEM program, and you have to learn an initially rather difficult method of working. This makes the program intimidating for a complete beginner. But if you are ready for a more powerful program, and don't want to pay commercial prices, *DB Writer* is well worth a look. And there are so many options to play with it could keep you happy for ages.

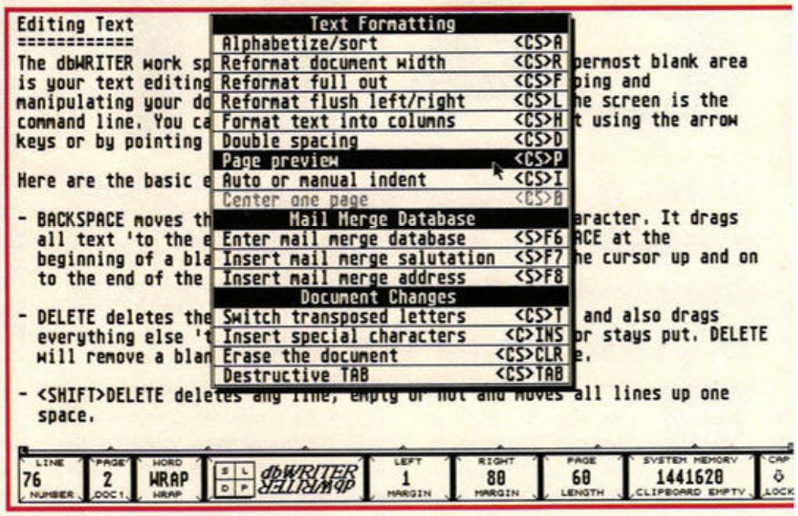
DB Writer

(Disk GD1672) PD prices, Goodman International
☎ 0782 335650

Highs
- Loads of features.

Lows
- Difficult to learn.

89%



Blimey, PD software is supposed to be a bit simple to use and uncomplicated, isn't it? Not *DB Writer,* in fact it's a bit too complex!

Commercial WPs

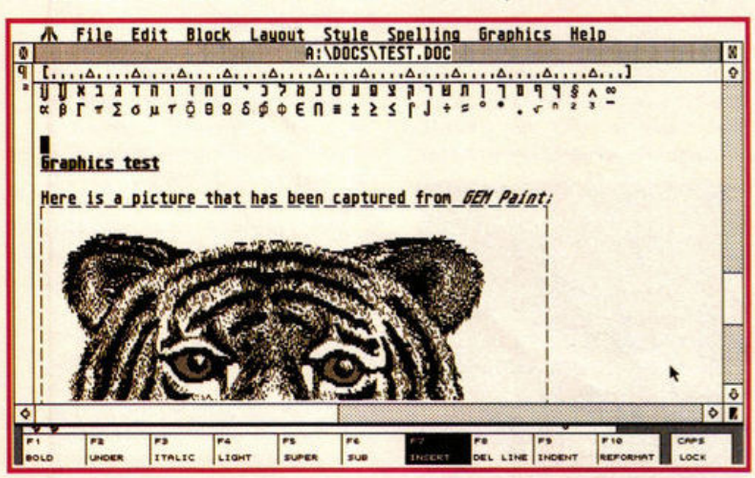
If you start to use your ST for more than just occasional writing, you'll want to move up from a PD WP to a mid-range commercial package that offers advantages like a proper printed manual and technical support. These generally offer more features and deliver better results via extra fonts and graphics capabilities. There's plenty of choice with all the major ST software houses offering a couple of titles. Some old favourites have been discontinued or superseded, so we've selected the best of the current bunch for an up-to-date assessment below.

1st Word Plus

1st Word Plus is the logical progression if you like Public Domain *1st Word.* It's the commercial development of the program, and works in similar style. *FWP* had the field to itself when the ST first came out and added to the features in *1st Word* – which acted kind of like a Cover Disk demo.

The major new facilities include a built-in spell checker, as well as the ability to import graphics and print them to an Epson compatible printer. Unfortunately printing pictures is not possible with other kinds of printers and the graphics have to be in *Degas* format. But there are many other workmanlike options, making the program a reasonable choice for straightforward text-based use, especially as you can form your very own user dictionary.

1st Word files can be imported, and you can save in ASCII format if necessary. The latest version of *FWP* is no different from that on sale three years ago, and it seems unlikely that there will be any further upgrades. So *FWP* is unlikely to be developed any further, which means if you're interested in multiple fonts, such as SpeedoGDOS, this is not the one for you. You can pick up *FWP* quite cheaply though, (for much less than the recommended price below) and it's worth considering.



1st Word Plus has a very clear, uncluttered screen with a row of function keys at the bottom for quick operation - just click on them.

1st Word Plus

£82, GST
☎ 0480 496789

Highs
- Simple to use.

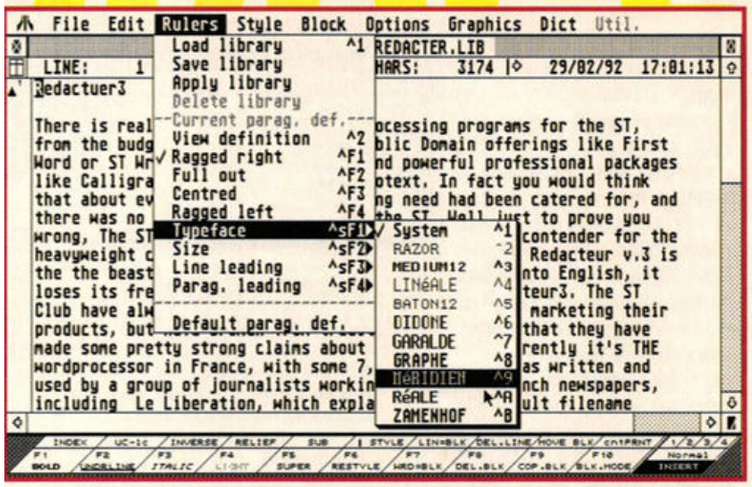
Lows
- No further development likely.

85%

Redacteur Jnr

Redacteur Jnr comes from The FaST Club, but originates in France, where it's claimed to be the most widely used WP. This *Junior* version is much cheaper than the full version but nevertheless this textcruncher is as fast as, if not faster than, *Protext. Redacteur Jnr* lacks some of the features found in the full version, – such as the dictionary – and it can only use your printer's inbuilt fonts whereas the *Snr* version uses any GEM fonts to give text in various sizes and styles. It also lacks its big brothers Equation Editor, Database and the other modules but these can always be bought for between £5 and £10 and added on later.

The core of the program though, the actual WP, is identical to that in the full version and you get the full 650 page manual with the *Junior* package. If you can't live without the spell checker and mail merge facilities you can add these modules for £8 each. There is also a mid-range variant called *Redacteur Lite,* which has many of the missing modules and is priced at £69. You can upgrade from *Junior* to *Lite* for



■ *Redacteur Junior* is almost too fast, and this textcruncher is pretty capable at analysing your words of wisdom and displaying the results.

£30, and all the modules are useable in all versions. It's worth getting the demo disk of the program, contact FaST Club for details.

Redacteur Jnr

£39, FaST Club
☎ 0602 455250
Highs
■ Powerful and fast.
Lows
■ Uses only your printer's fonts in this version.
87%

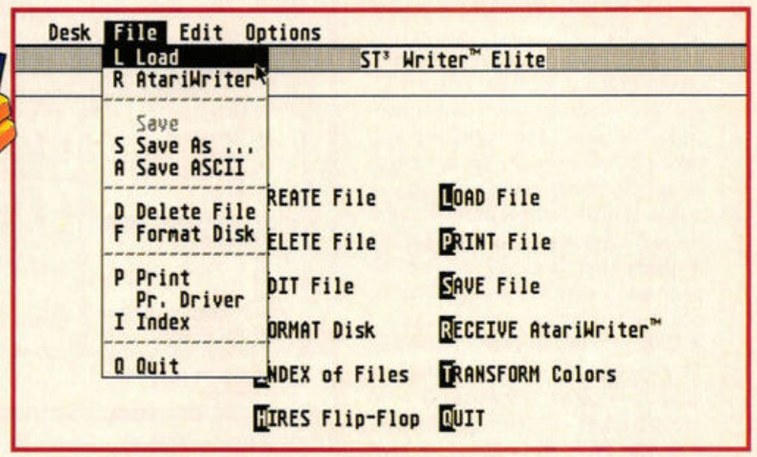
Write ON

Write ON is quite a bargain, it's one of the cheapest WPs in the commercial range and boasts excellent graphical abilities even though it doesn't use GDOS. Instead of relying on the ST's usual system font, the program displays your text in a Mac-like fashion which enables you to have lots of different fonts and type sizes in your document. These all appear in a WYSIWYG manner, so you get a good idea of how your page looks before you print. Further fonts are readily available, and up to 20 can be employed in a single document – memory permitting. You can import IMG format pictures onto your pages and these can even be re-sized, as in DTP software.

Write ON's pictorial prowess slows things down a little as the program works in graphical mode, but if you are looking for a WP that produces pretty results you won't mind the slight wait. *Write ON* is ideal for students or anyone else on a tight budget who wants to produce illustrated projects or reports. If you have *STF* 33 you'll find that we gave *Write ON* away on the Cover Disk – turn to page 92 if you missed your copy – but you can get the whole package including the manual direct from Compo for just £29. The program runs on a 512K ST, but you won't be able to use too many fonts as these consume memory.

Write ON

£29, Compo Software
☎ 0487 3582
Highs
■ Great value for money.
■ Graphics and multiple fonts.
Lows
■ No dictionary.
90%



■ *Write ON* has a WYSIWYG display, and offers the best all-round graphics and fonts capabilities in the mid-range slot. And it's cheap too!

Document Processors

If you are really serious about your writing, you'll want the best tools available, which means moving up to a document processor. Containing more features than PD or commercial WPs, these powerful beasts can be a bit daunting for first-time users, and some are expensive. But if you aim to produce top quality work, a document processor can certainly help you achieve top-class results. ST owners are spoilt for choice in this range, but we have selected and rated the best DPs available below.

AtariWorks

AtariWorks is the most modern WP for the ST and Falcon in that it's designed to work with Speedo GDOS. This gives *AtariWorks* the ability to use scalable fonts on the screen, show them as WYSIWYG and output them accurately to virtually any printer. If you buy a Falcon in the States, Atari give you both SpeedoGDOS and *AtariWorks* free, unfortunately over here you have to fork out £130 for the two programs. You need at least 2MBytes of RAM to use *AtariWorks* and realistically you require a hard drive too – this is a power-user's program. Another important factor is that *Works* is actually three applications in one. As well as the WP mode, there is a built-in database and spreadsheet too, which you can switch between them by clicking on an icon. And you can use these three together so information or charts from the spreadsheet, or database, can be incorporated into your WP document. This makes *AtariWorks* an ideal business tool that's able to handle most commercial presentation and data needs in just one package. The dictionary provided with *AtariWorks* is fully anglicised, and there's a good built-in thesaurus too. It's a shame Atari don't bundle it with the Falcon here, but if you're looking for an all-in-one office package, this would a good choice.

■ *AtariWorks* can't import many kinds of text, but it handles ASCII, and displays it in a very attractive DTP manner with a range of *Speedo* fonts.

AtariWorks

£129.95 with SpeedoGDOS
£99.95 without SpeedoGDOS
Hisoft ☎ 0525 718181
Highs
■ *Speedo* fonts give impressive output.
■ Fully integrated package.
Lows
■ Needs lots of RAM and hard drive to work well.
■ Some operations slow.
87%

Redacteur3

Redacteur3 is the full version of a powerful French document processor and is even faster than *Protext*. It's been fully translated into English and comes with a huge 650 page paperback manual. You need at least 1MByte of RAM to run *Redacteur3*, and if you want to be able to print in graphics mode, 2MBytes are required. The graphics mode enables you to use multiple fonts, a good number of which are provided with the software and you can also use GEM fonts.

If you're not bothered about alternative fonts you can print using your printers built-in fonts, which is quicker. The software handles virtually any text format you throw at it and converts them automatically into *Redacteur's* own file format on the fly (most WPs make you use a separate utility to convert between different formats, so *Redacteur's* unique in the respect). The spell checker can operate in French or English, and you can edit the user dictionary.

Each paragraph can be assigned a "Style," which can include the kind of text style, font, point size and justification. The only minus point, in the way it handles text, is the pro-

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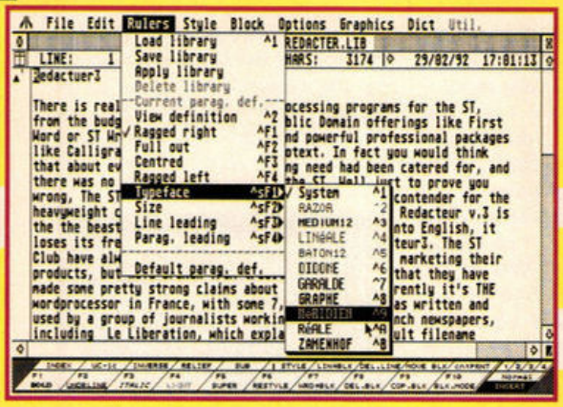


Redacteur3 boasts so many options that many of the menus are of the "cascading" kind, and some of the fonts available are shown here.

gram's inability to cater for multiple columns. *Redacteur3* is adept at using pictures – recognising 16 different graphic formats which can all be loaded into your document and adjusted and cropped as needed. Your pics can be re-scaled by whatever amount you want via a dialog box. The program is jam-packed with many user-definable features and uses GEM plus its own enhanced file selector so it can perform other useful tasks too. A kind of cross between *1st Word Plus* in appearance and *Protext* in speed and power, *Redacteur3* is an accomplished performer. You can upgrade to it from the *Lite* and Junior versions quite cheaply. Contact FaST Club for a demo disk.

Redacteur3

£99, FaST Club
☎ 0602 455250

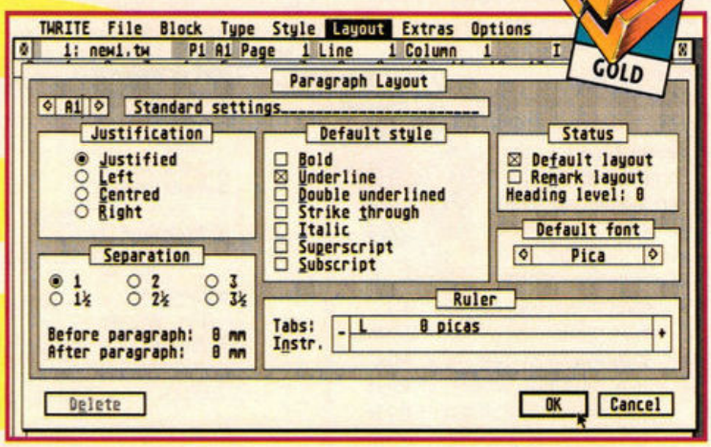
Highs
- Fast and powerful.
- Handles many text and picture formats.

Lows
- Lacks thesaurus.
- No scalable fonts.

88%

That's Write 2

Write ON's big brother, this DP has all the features you would expect in a high-end product, so you need at least 1MByte of RAM. More's useful if you intend to use multiple fonts – up to 20 can be used in each document RAM permitting. Luckily, fonts can be loaded and unloaded as required, and happily GDOS is not used or required even though GEM fonts can be used. Like *Redacteur3*, you can "tag" paragraphs, so attributes can be instantly applied. You can have lots of different paragraph styles which can be defined and named at will. *TW2* uses its own enhanced form of GEM, and you can have nine windows open at once. Pictures can be imported in IMG format only, a little limiting but you can position and re-size them very conveniently using the mouse, as you would in DTP software. The program's operation is very friendly, and flexible macros facility means you can program some powerful operations into it. The printing's fast for graphics based software, and if your printer has built-in fonts that match those used on-screen *TW2* intelligently uses them instead of printing in graphics mode. A good all-rounder, and with the forthcoming *That's Write 3*, it promises even better things as well as an upgrade path for existing owners.



Part of *That's Write 2's* charm is its the super-friendly dialog boxes, they're so easy to use and packed with powerful features too.

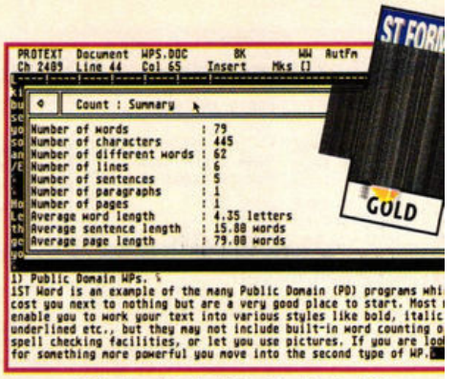
That's Write 2

£129, Compo Software
☎ 0487 3582

Highs
- Excellent use of IMG pictures.
- Uses fonts without GDOS.

Lows
- Can only use IMG pics, but we're looking hard for faults here!

90%



Mark a block of text in *Protext 6* and do all sorts of weird with it, like analysing it in minute detail.

Protext 6

Protext 6 is the latest version of Arnor's heavyweight, which supersedes the now discontinued *v5*. Despite not being a GEM based program, *Protext* has always been very popular and this new incarnation is another winner. While older versions have been strictly text-only with no easy way to import pictures, *v6* addresses this – sort of! You can now incorporate graphic images into your documents, but you can't view them on-screen. It's not until they're printed that you see how they look. *Protext* has never pretended to be a graphics orientated program, and it runs faster by adopting the non-WYSIWYG approach. This version supports printers with scalable fonts like the Hewlett Packard Laserjet 4, so if, perhaps, you want large headlines on your page, you can have them, but even if you've chosen huge three inch high headings, on-screen it appears in the usual ST system font with a style marker before it. When the cursor's over any of that text, the style, font and point size is shown at the top of the screen, so working's easier than you'd imagine.

Although *v6* seems out of step with current trends, it scores by being quicker than the competition. Printed results are excellent, especially from modern laser printers whose wide range of fonts are all accessible from within *Protext*. Although it's not cheap, you can upgrade from *v5.5* for £32.25, from *v5* for £47 and from *v4.3* for £58.75. A free demo disk is available, contact Arnor for details. ***stf***

Protext 6

£152.72, Arnor Ltd
☎ 0733 68909

Highs
- Fast and powerful.
- Excellent dictionary and thesaurus.

Lows
- Needs a hard drive to work well.

92%

FEATURES COMPARISON TABLE

Program	Recommended Price	ST FORMAT Rating	Minimum RAM needed	Loads 1st Word	Loads ASC11	Spellcheck included	Thesaurus included	Word Counter	Imports graphics	Save Block
PD WORD PROCESSORS										
1ST Word	PD prices	80%	0.5MByte	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
ST Writer	PD prices	75%	0.5MByte	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
DB Writer	PD prices	89%	0.5MByte	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
COMMERCIAL WORD PROCESSORS										
1ST Word Plus	£82	85%	1MByte	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Redacteur Jr	£39	87%	0.5MByte	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Write ON	£29	90%	0.5MByte	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
DOCUMENT PROCESSORS										
AtariWorks	£129.95	87%	2MBytes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Redacteur3	£99	88%	1MByte	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
That's Write2	£129	90%	1MByte	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Protext 6	£152.72	92%	1MByte	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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New Age PDL £1.75 EACH

Unless Otherwise Stated

All disks require a colour system unless: 'H' - High resolution monitor required, 'A' - Any setup suitable.

FALCON 030 - ALL HD DISKS

FALC 2 - Falcon Boot 1.2, Backward 2.24 (ST emulator), New Depack, Text Files, Desk Copy, Deskpic 1.05, Sysinfo, DC Xtract 2.1, Revive, SpiritED 1.3 (utils)
FALC 9 - Grotesque (Excellent!), Gourad, Speeder, Plasma 30 & 50, Intel + more! (demos)
FALC 31 - Temptation! The first disk of an EXCLUSIVE pack of JPEG pictures of gorgeous girls. Excellent quality pictures and the three disk pack contains no less than ninety pictures! Yes 90! Disks 2 & 3 on FALC 32 & 33.
FALC 35 - Nethack 3.1.1 - 2 Meg memory+. Brilliant dungeons and dragons game.
FALC 36 - RDE 3.1, Tonwin 1.4, Uho 2.22, Zoo 2.1, Zip 2.3, Gem Bench 3.25, Good Backup 1.13, Boot Init 1.1, Ezapy 1.5, Frontrol, Shbuf 1.3 (utils)
FALC 37 - Fractal Playtime, Gemview, Delimpaint, Gix Gif, Binaris 2.0 + more! (art)
FALC 52 - System Audio Manager 1.1 - assign samples to events, Digitape 2 demo (music)
FALC 77 - Emocs 3.11, Everest 1.5, KM Term, Atomik 3.5, X-Menu 1.3, Profile 1.43, Rezfooler (run RGB stuff on VGA monitor), Fullres 1.01, Swabs, Dclock 1.0, Fuzzy Clock 1.14
FALC 96 - When Dreams Become Reality (RGB), Warum (RGB), Icanvex (RGB) (demos)
FALC 103 - Oxyd (excellent!), Des Lasers et Des Hommes (3D shoot em up), Masters of Chaos (Dungeon Master Clone), Tron, Ishar Editor, Mario Kart demo. (games)
FALC 106 - Falcon Flight Demo - real time zooming demo over fractal landscape + great music
FALC 107 - Crime by the DNT crew, Magnet by Alphatech, Bobs-1. All RGB/TV only. (demos)
FALC 109 - DMB icons - two large sets of replacement icons, Before Dawn screensaver 1.25
FALC 110 - Videl - easy to use TGA viewer, Rainbow demo 0.5 - Truecolour art package.
FALC 112 - Mahjong II - German version of this classic tile game. Disk approx 1/2 full.
FALC 113 - Manga demo (4meg+) - digitised pictures of a woman modelling a skimpy bikini!
FALC 114 - Multi-Dialogue 1.3, Master Browse 3.2 - excellent text file viewer, T-Cache 6.0
FALC 115 - Octalyser 0.8 - another 8-track tracker ported from the STE + docs & source code.
FALC 116 - Popo was a Blade Runner (4meg+) new demo by EKO, very good. RGB/TV only.
FALC 117 - POV Raytracer 2 on 2 disks, zipped & expands to nearly 5 meg! £3.50.
FALC 119 - Moving Pixels Demo (VGA) - 4 meg+ - a mega-massive demo that requires 10 megabytes of hard drive space! From Australia, this basically shows off the Falcon itself - the sort of thing you'd see in a shop window, covering graphics, sound and productivity. Very good. Five disks £8.00!

GAMES

MEGA-GAMES PACK ONE!

No less than ten disks crammed to the brim with archived games (de-archiver and printed instructions supplied) to squeeze in an amazing 117 games covering board/puzzle/strategy/arcade and adventure. For a full list, ask with your order or if not ordering, send a stamp. All should run on a colour system with 512k and be STE compatible! You will need about twenty disks to unarchive these disks onto! AMAZING VALUE FOR MONEY.

117 GAMES - JUST £14.95!

GAME 168 - Napoleon - a 'Risk' style game of war and strategy. 'H'
GAME 185 - Oxyd 2 - the sequel to the brilliant Oxyd, much harder than the original. 'H'
GAME 186 - Tetrix - new Tetris type game. 'H'
GAME 11 - A Question of Snooker, Pinball, Devastator, Roll n Nudge, Ranger
GAME 78 - Popeyed - a pop music game with an adult theme.
GAME 83 - Grandad & the Holey Vest - superb animated adventure. 1 Meg+
GAME 104 - Blitt! - A very nice version of Tetris. STE ONLY
GAME 117 - Fast Freddy - lovely platform game with superb graphics.
GAME 131 - Gloss Buttock of Thorg - save the land from the evil buttock! - 1 Meg+
GAME 132 - Psycho Pig - two disk platform game, very cute, £3.50
GAME 139 - Grandad II - the sequel to Game 83, comes on 2 disks 1 Meg+ £3.50
GAME 148 -Operation Blue Sunrise 3 - massive STAC adventure game. 1 Meg+
GAME 150 -Coarse Angler 1.02 - go tackle fishing on your ST!
GAME 151 -Sim Pig! - a brilliant pig farm simulation! Like Sim City & Sim Earth.
GAME 157 -B17 - bomb the buildings, F16 - very good flight game, 8 missions.
GAME 178 - Argon, Out, Codename Bomb, Pyramid, Disk Hunt, Sirtet, Turbo, War Jeep, Plumber, Picker, Planet Man, Uboat, Ypsilon - 13 games!
GAME 179 - Asteroid, Bang 3, Battle, Bellum, Quiz, Blaster, Chunks, Europe, Explode, Fuzzball, Gems, Invaders, Megaroids, Micro, Octopod, Othello, Pac man, Plant, Rockfall, Tarax, Tennis, Wall Street, Zappy.
GAME 180 - Mystic Well, Deep Lair, Football, Harris Goes Skiing, Haunted House, Invaders, Jumpster, Racer, Stoneage Deluxe, USA, Zyxon, Firestorm.
GAME 181 - Utopos 1.5 - very slick STE only Oids/Grav type game, Endurance - 3D game.
GAME 183 -Towers - a great new Dungeon Master Clone - the best yet! 2 disks (1Mb+) £3.50
GAME 187 - Karate Champion, Hector and the Mutant Vampire Tomatoes - nice platforms.
GAME 188 - Premier Mahjong II - excellent version of this superb tile game. 60Hz only.
GAME 189 - Gud Lee's Quest - platform game for kids, Mindmelt - roleplaying fantasy game.
GAME 190 - Quest for knowledge - quiz type game set in a maze arena.
GAME 191 - Walls of Illusion - yet another Dungeon Master Clone, good one though. 1 Meg+
GAME 193 - World Fighting Championships - beat up opponents from all over the world.
GAME 198 - Roll-It - ingenious puzzle game with 40 levels, a sort of ball/tile game. 1 Meg+
GAME 199 - Skulls - A flash STE only version of Minesweeper from the PC, good. 1 Meg+
GAME 201 - It's a Mug's Game - good overhead view boxing game with nice graphics etc.
GAME 204 - Gone to the Dogs - bet on the races! Grav - good arcade game based on Oids.
GAME 209 - Money Mania - collect all the money from each screen, loads of nasties etc Good.
GAME 210 - Ruthless, shoot em up, Spherical - good platform game, Serendipity - good puzzler.

BUDGIE GAMES - £2.75 EACH

BUGAM 89 - Horse Racing Simulator for 1 to 5 players. Buy/sell and bet!
BUGAM 104 - Jetpack - another faithful clone of a classic Spectrum game.
BUGAM 113 - Football Tactician - formerly a £20 release! Excellent
BUGAM 121 - Super Scramble - take a trip to the 8-bit days with this shoot 'em up.

DEMOS

DEMO 356 - Kubo Club Culture Mix Pack 1 - six great bits of club music.
DEMO 355 - The Broco Demo - nice auto-running multi-part from Diamond Design.
DEMO 351 - The Edge of Panic demo - a good STE only demo by ACCS.
DEMO 350 - Exhaust Demo - another good STE only demo by ACCS, 1Meg EXACTLY!
DEMO 342 - Sid James Demo - clips from the films - STE only 1 meg+, 2 disks £3.50.
DEMO 335 - Reality is a Lie - a 13 screen demo by Psychomix, very good. 1 Meg+
DEMO 333 - Cemetery demo - a good digi-music demo.
DEMO 330 - Beginning of the Ending - this demo actually plays in the background of a game of breakout which is played with 5 balls! How's your concentration?

ART & GRAPHICS

ART 1 - A disk full of 23 miscellaneous utilities including viewgif 1.2.
ART 51 - Crackart 1.36 - latest version of the best ST art package! 1 Meg+
ART 128 - Gemview - new version of this superb viewer/converter
ART 157 - PAD 2.4 - English version of this high res drawing package. 1 Meg+
ART 172 - Paintshop Plus 2.03 - A commercial quality drawing package.
ART 187-196 - Temptation! Volume 1 - the first pack in a whole new range of top quality pictures of tempting girls! Two versions (please state which) - one for STFM and one for STE which takes advantage of a 32,768 colour palette! EXCLUSIVE to New Age PDL! Ten crammed disks at just £15.00!
ART 209 - Erotic Dreams Slideshow 1 - all pictures of Supermodel Cindy Crawford.
ART 212/213 - POV Raytracer, the best raytracer around! 2 disks £3.50.

SOUNDTRACKER MUSIC

TRAC 129 - Faux, Praghank, Cult 2, Cult 3, Federal Force, Rave 1
TRAC 128 - Con, Short, House, Jewel, Spassong, Celtic 6, Rappit, A-Team, Sweet Dreams
TRAC 127 - More Lemmings, Backpapped, Psychic 1, Bushfire, Donna 2, Ace Base, Echoing.
TRAC 126 - Scrambled Mind, 1 + World, Wyre It, Hope Part 2, Lotus Turbo 2, H-Metal
TRAC 125 - The Loader Final, Artificial, Finally I Play, Space Journey, Sit1.

WORDPROCESSING & DTP

WORD 1 - ST Writer Elite, EDI Text, Zap ST, ST Page, Typist, Desk Accessories. 'A'
WORD 4 - First Word + tools, Grammar checker demo, Spell Binder, Text Filter. 'A'
WORD 5 - Calamus Demo, no save function but you can print. 'H'
WORD 8 - DB Writer 1.4 - very slick wordprocessor with many features. 'H' 1 Meg+
WORD 9 - Calamus Support disk - loads of utilities for Calamus and fonts etc. 'H'
WORD 12 - Papyrus Office Demo 2.26 - good document processor with fonts etc. 'H'
WORD 13 - Calamus S demo - fully functioning except save. 2 disks £3.50. 'H' 1 Meg+

BUSINESS

BUSI 2 - Sheet 2.0, Dbase One, First Base 1.6, Home Budget Template. 'A'
BUSI 4 - Opus 2.2 - brilliant spreadsheet. 1 Meg+ 'A'
BUSI 6 - Double Sentry Book Keeping System, Address Book. 'A'
BUSI 7 - Actubank 1.1 et - complete home accounts system - colour only.
BUSI 11 - Compact Office Management Program 2.05 - for businesses, tons of features. 'A'
BUSI 12 - Inventory PRO - keep track of stock levels, GP Patient Care for GP's 'H'
BUSI 14 - Data Techniques 1.41 - easy to use but powerful shareware database system. 'A'

FREE ST CATALOGUE WITH FREE SOFTWARE FOR NEW CUSTOMERS UPON REQUEST

UTILITIES & APPLICATIONS

UTIL 2 - Stargem, Head Start 1.1, DC Clock, Disk Checker, Hard Disk Utils, Ram Disks, Hack 'n' Copy, Turtle 3.2 (HD backup), Megaformat, Memory Test. 'A'
UTIL 4 - Pooh 2.5, ST Init 3.4, Switcher - loads programs faster, 20 DC utilities. 'A'
UTIL 5 - F-Copy 3, DC Showit, Desk Manager, Disk Scan, Mono Emulator 5, Spool, DC Stuffer (loads 32 accs), Speech Synthesizer, Mouse Accelerator. 'A'
UTIL 6 - James The Butler, London Phone Codes, MenuSYS, Pinhead, Super Calender Batch Startup, Auto Sort, Postmortem, No Bombs, E-Disk, 9 Quick Utilities. 'A'
UTIL 12 - Jam Packer 4, Wind-X35 (Modular control panel), Satellite 4.01, Clock Set. 'A'
UTIL 13 - German to English translator, Fast Print, DC Salvage, MINT, Mocsil 3.0 'A'
UTIL 14 - Printer Drivers inc Canon Bubblejet, Qume Daisywheel, Brother + Epson. 'A'
UTIL 16 - Chameleon - loads and unloads accessories without having to reboot, Sticker 3.0 ('H'), Definitive File Selector, Super Virus Killer, Benchmark. 'A'
UTIL 19 - Your Second Manual, Jokes, GDOS info, Bombs info + several magazines. 'A'
UTIL 30 - Superboot 8.1, Build your Own Scanner, Report Writer, Disk Cleaner. 'A'
UTIL 35 - Cheetah 1.1 (high speed copying util), Rainbow TOS patches, Unarj 2.2. 'A'
UTIL 38 - Printer Drivers inc: IOXP 1124, Star LC24, NEC Pinwriter, Brother, Canon, Citizen, HP Deskjet, Oki, Qume, Taxan, Toshiba, Riteman, Atari. 'A'
UTIL 40 - Loads of packers inc: Atomik 3.5, Automation 5, Dragon 3, Fire 2, Ice 2.4, Pompey 1.9, Speed Packer 2, Branch Always Packer, + Multi Depacker 1.5 'A'
UTIL 42 - Intro Maker - mix pictures, sprites, scrolls and music together. Colour only.
UTIL 45 - Kaos Desk 2.01, Terra Desktop 1.36 - replacement desktops. 'A'
UTIL 46 - STOS Shoot em up builder kit 0.6 - colour only
UTIL 53 - TOS Version 1.0 - allows you to run programs that don't run on your TOS. 'A'
UTIL 54 - Message Scroller, Archive Shell, Envelope Printer Demo, Mega Cracker 'A'
UTIL 55 - Spectrum Emulator 1.2 - run Speccy games - includes Hobbit, Manic Miner 1 Meg+
UTIL 57 - Revenge Doc Displayer 3.0, Wordfinder 3.0, Desktop inf configurator. 'A'
UTIL 58 - Career Themes Inventory and Personality Tester - great fun!
UTIL 59 - Neodesk patches - upgrades 3.01 to 3.02 to 3.03 'A'
UTIL 60 - JC Label 1.3, Jon-Dos 1.7, Flowchart Compiler, Boot Time 2.0, Multisync. 'A'
UTIL 62 - BJ Chrome 1.1, Desk Master, Grocery Lister, Silk Mouse, Auto Load, Blitz. 'A'
UTIL 66 - Notion X utility disk - over 150 programs! Everything you need to get you started! Includes disk utils, diary, virus killer, packers etc - highly recommended! 'A'
UTIL 67 - Label CAD 2.2 - design cards, posters etc, Document files on UTIL 68. 'H'
UTIL 70 - Route Finder 1.8 - Like Autoroute - plans journeys for you, SpiritED 1.3, Die UHR. 'A'
UTIL 74 - Award Maker - easy to use program to create certificates with nice fonts, borders.
UTIL 75 - Ideskit 3.4 - file printer that saves up to 80% of paper used! 2 disks £3.50 'A'
UTIL 77 - Before Dawn 1.25 - latest and biggest version of this screen saver. 2 disks £3.50.
UTIL 79 - Spectrum Games - a disk full of games to go with the emulator on UTIL 55. 'A'
UTIL 80 - Terradesk 1.38 (latest), X-Jet 097, Curtains - protect your ST from snoopers. 'A'
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MUSIC 12 - Henry Cash Sequencer, Composer 'A'
MUSIC 13 - Drum patterns for Co-boe in standard MIDI format ' A'
MUSIC 16 - Yamaha PSS790 Editor, includes loads of sample voices.
MUSIC 22 - Alchemie Junior 2.2 - sequencer with real-time multitasking etc 'H'
MUSIC 23 - Sound Merlin - good ex-commercial program, Mozarts Dice Waltz - compose music without musical knowledge. 'H'
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MUSIC 26 - PSS Utilities disk, loads of programs including patch editor, librarian etc. 'A'
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MUSIC 29 - Kawai K1 synth sounds. 'A'
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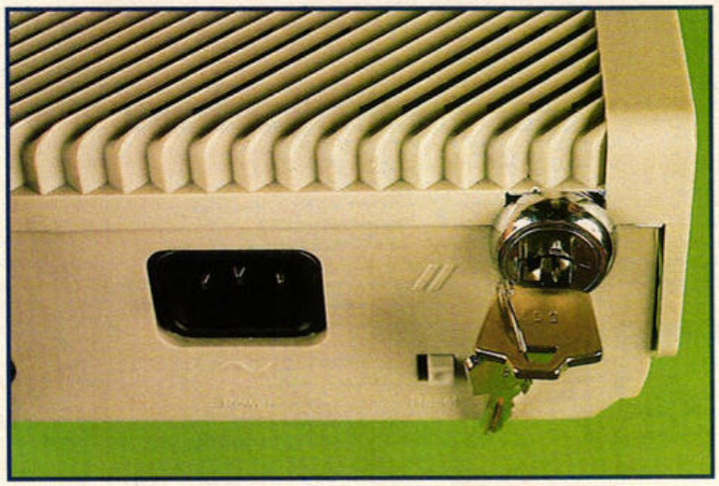
GET SWITCHED ON

Fed up with unauthorised personnel messing about with your ST? Clive Parker shows you how to lock out all illegal access with this handy keyswitch modification

Protect your ST software and hardware from being used and abused behind your back by installing this simple modification. All you have to do is put a keyswitch in one of the conductors of the power supply unit (PSU) enabling you to switch off the ST and remove the key, preventing anyone else from using your ST without your permission.

Another plus is that if someone decides to steal your ST they are not going to be able to use it without stripping it down and reconnecting the original wires on the PSU, most thieves aren't going to be bothered to mess about inside your ST trying to hot wire it – they're more likely to dump it in a wheelie bin in a back alley somewhere. That means there's (slightly) more chance of you getting your ST back.



And there we have it, your ST re-assembled with the keyswitch firmly mounted above the reset button. Now nobody can use your ST unless they are a keyholder and have the correct forms in triplicate, signed, counter-signed, filed, lost, found, lost again and concealed under the office badger for safe-keeping.

Doing the job

This isn't a terribly difficult modification to make to your ST, in fact, there's only a couple of wires to solder and they're not even inside your ST – so you don't have to worry about a wild melt-down ruining your day.

All of the parts you need are available from any electronic or electrical supplier, a 240V/1A keyswitch, about 30cm of 1A rated single-core wire and a couple of 2A connectors. The total cost is around six or seven pounds.

You'll also need some general purpose tools to do the job.

"Protect your ST software and hardware by installing this simple modification"

We used a hand drill, soldering iron, desktop vice, junior hacksaw,

WIN YOURSELF £100!

Have you come up with a useful, helpful or simply essential upgrade or modification to your ST? If you have then send us details of the modification – including photographs – and we'll use the best ones in *ST FORMAT*. Every one we use wins the sender a cool £100 in untraceable used fivers, so send your DIY project to "I Did It Myself," *ST FORMAT*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath BA1 2BW. – and you too could be in with the money.

This month's winner is Matthew Weinel from Sherbourne in Dorset who came up with this simple – but effective – keyswitch modification. Well done Matthew.

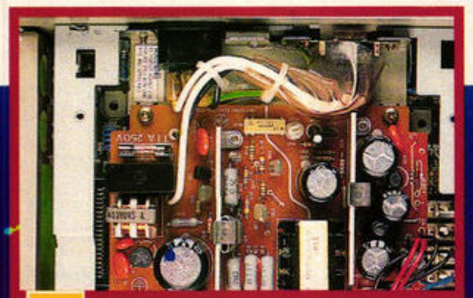
ST FORMAT £100 WINNER

ELECTRICITY CAN KILL!

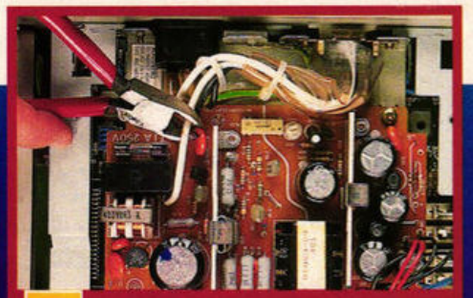
Remember that mains electricity can kill if you are not sure what you are doing. Ensure that your ST is disconnected from the mains electricity supply before starting this modification and remember that some components can retain a charge even when disconnected from the supply.

If you have any doubts at all about this project then make sure you consult a qualified electrician.

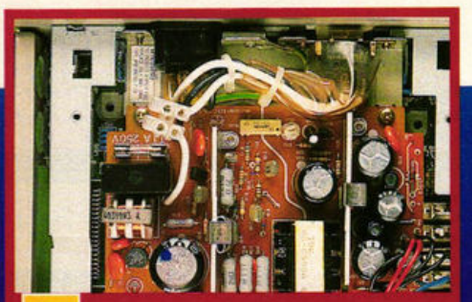
YOUR ALL-IN-ONE GUIDE TO ADDING A KEYSWITCH TO YOUR ST



1 Once you have the PSU exposed you have to locate the wire running from the power switch to the centre of main board of the PSU.



2 Now you have located the wire you must cut it with a pair of snips, this is because the keyswitch is going to be across this wire.



3 Strip back both wires and connect them to the terminal block. Make sure the terminal block is rated at least 1 amp and 240 volts.

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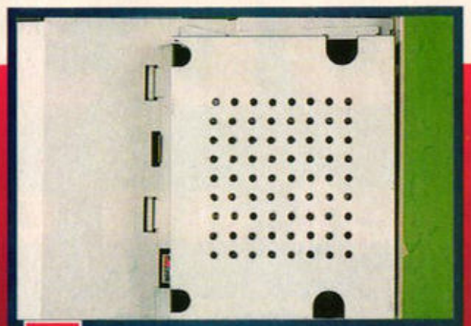
ONCE AGAIN IT'S TIME TO TAKE YOUR ST TO BITS, JUST FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW

1 Unplug everything from your ST including the mouse and joysticks. Turn it upside-down on a flat surface and remove the seven screws in the square shaped holes. Carefully turn your ST the right way up and remove the top of the case.

2 All you have to do now is gently lift the keyboard and carefully unplug it from the motherboard and put it safely to one side. Don't worry about plugging the keyboard back to the motherboard because the plug only fits one way around.



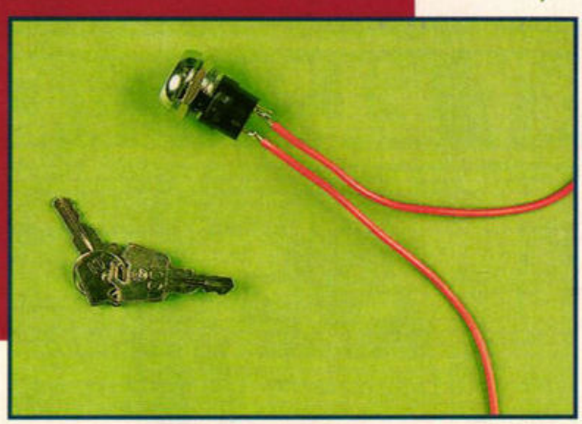
3 This little square piece of shielding with the air holes covers the PSU. There are a couple of annoying twist tabs you have to untwist before you can remove the cover, once the cover is removed you're ready to rock'n'roll.

AN INTERESTING PARTS LIST

You don't need very many parts to install your keyswitch and they are available from practically any electrical or electronic store. We bought our parts locally, but here's the Maplin part numbers and prices, you can order goods from Maplins on ☎ 0702 556751. Do remember though there may be a charge for posting and packing

Single-pole single-throw switch
CJ98G £3.95
1 Metre Red wire, 6 amp
XR32K 15p
2 amp terminal block
FE78K 56p

■ Get yourself some wire rated at least 1 amp, 240 volts and solder about 15cm to each of the terminals on the keyswitch. Strip off the ends ready for connection to the terminal block.



long-nosed pliers, snips, a small file and some small Philips screwdrivers. That's all you need.

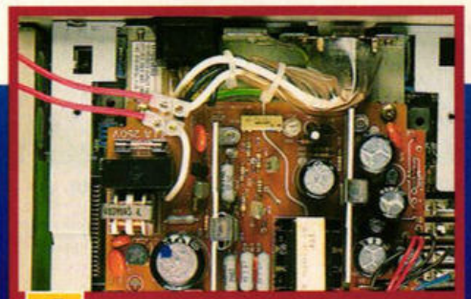
Preparation is quite simple. Make sure that everything is unplugged and strip down your ST as shown in the first walkthrough, locate the wire going from the power switch to the centre of the PSU on the left-hand side. It's usually white and is very prominent. Snip this wire in the centre leaving yourself enough room to strip back the ends about 5mm, cut off two connectors from the terminal block and connect one wire in each terminal.

Get your single-core cable and cut two 15cm lengths, this is just enough to give you room to manoeuvre inside case of your ST. You can cut longer pieces if you like, it doesn't make that much difference to the final job. Strip back both ends of each piece of wire about 5mm and tin one end with solder, now tin the two terminals of your keyswitch with solder and then solder the two wires to the keyswitch terminals. It's a good idea to wrap the connections with electrical insulation tape because they carry mains voltage.

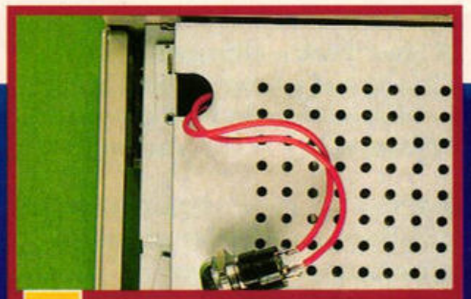
Get the PSU cover and thread the wires through one of the large holes near the back and connect the wires to the terminal block – it doesn't matter which way around you do it. Once you have connected the wires you can replace the lid of the PSU. Now you have to cut a hole for the keyswitch in the back of your ST, the best place is just to the side of the PSU. Use the keyswitch as a guide, you can cut a square slot because keyswitches usually have two straight edges for fixing purposes. Use the drill and the junior hacksaw to make the slot and clean it up using a small file, now fix the switch in position. The last part of the job is cutting a slot in the top half of the case so it sits over the keyswitch, once that's done you can put your ST back together. Job done, yet another fine *ST FORMAT* DIY project completed. ***stf***

"Preparation is quite simple. Make sure that everything is unplugged and strip down your ST"

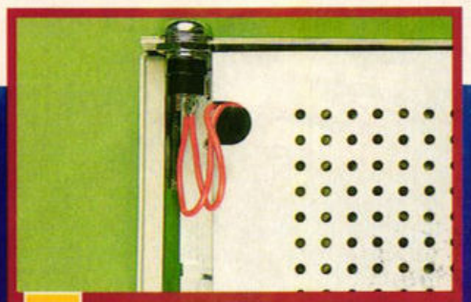
– IT'S EASY WHEN YOU KNOW HOW



4 Get your keyswitch and thread the wires through the hole near the back left of the PSU cover. Connect the wires to each of the terminals.



5 Replace the PSU cover being careful not to trap any of the wires. Now mark the back of the case and cut a slot the same size as the switch.



6 Fix the keyswitch in position and fix it using the nut. You may have to cut the top half of the case to fit over the switch before assembling your ST.

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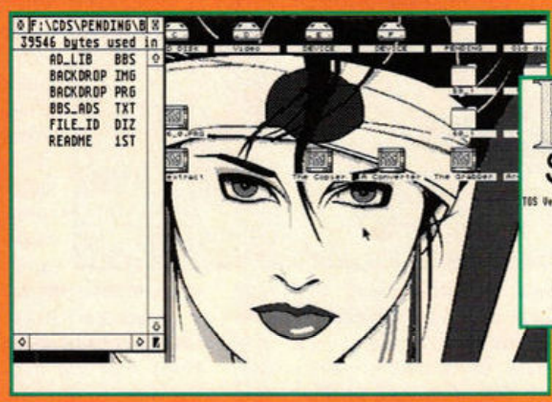

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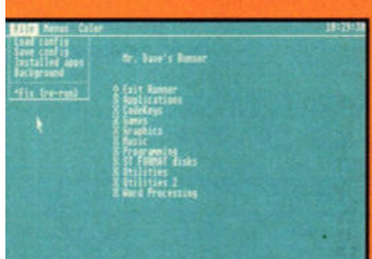

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PUBLIC SECTOR

Public Domain – it's irrepressible. A bit like the nature of *Monkey*, actually

Spacewar 2000 - not so much a game as a way of death! Pity you need two people to play it, a computer controlled adversary would be most welcome.

GAMES

SPACEWAR 2000
LAPD – DISK G365

It's there. It's almost there. But a few silly, silly mistakes stop this from being a truly great game.

Spacewar 2000 has an enormous amount going for it. It's sort of a cross between *Asteroids* and *Space War*, that venerable coin-op of vector graphics and hilarious physics, where you had to blow up your opponent without being sucked into a black hole. The ST version boasts better ships, bounties so you can afford to buy better ships, and insurance so you can claim on the better ship you've just driven into the side of a large rock. It keeps the fully definable aspect of *Space War*, so you can toggle effects and obstacles to your heart's content.

Up to four players can take part. There are very silly options, such as turning on gravity between ships and asteroids. You get special weapons. Power-ups appear during the game. You can buy death bombs, so when you get blown up, laser beams, or mines, or heat-seeking missiles burst from your exploding ship and revenge you on the opposition. Your score is broken down into percentage of shots fired to percentage of hits made. There are spaceports on the playfield that recharge your guns, billing you if you survive. It's exceptionally well-designed, and plays quite splendidly. Blasting your friends has never been so much fun at so low a price: the version in distribution is the full game. The author is trusting in people to register for the principle of the thing. But.

You need at least one other person to play, as there are no computer ships. You are required to have another joystick, and the four-player mode, fairly obviously, needs an adaptor and two more joysticks. Why no keyboard option? At the lowest level, the game is over far too quickly, as you have so little armour. Fair enough, you can crank up the money available and buy the Ship From Hell, but you shouldn't have to. A bit more balance at the beginning would go down well, rather than having to go through manually and adjust things. In summary, an enormously playable game which just – just – misses out on a very high score indeed.

***STF* RATING 78%**

SNACMAN, SQUISH AND GAMBLE
LAPD – DISK G361

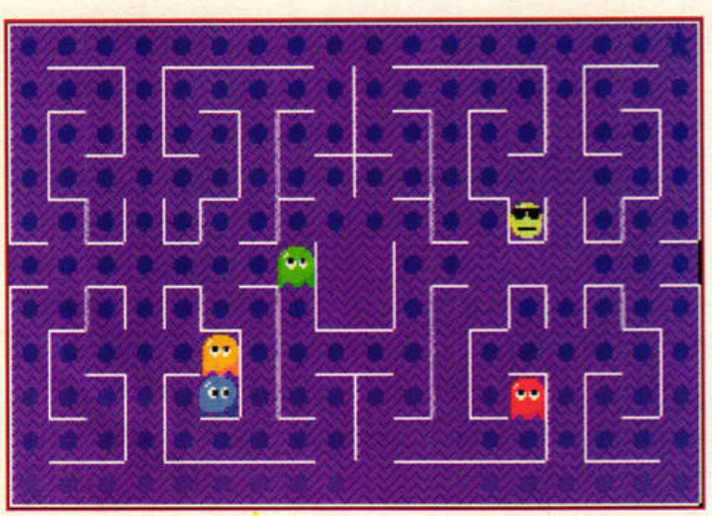
Quick question time: connect the words Snacman and Bulgulators before the end of this review. You may start.

In the meantime, *Squish* is a failure where you're supposed to think ahead and push blocks on to randomly bouncing things, but instead get very frustrated very quickly, and *Gamble* is a gambling sim. So it's up to *Snacman* to save the day, which it almost does. Bravely refusing to conceal its heritage (*Pacman*, embarrassingly slow on the uptake fans) the game adds a couple of splendid ideas to the form. The fruit bonuses are triggered by eating ghosts, appearing entertainingly dangerously in the ghost den itself. And there's a two- or three-player mode where the extra players control ghosts. Missed-opportunistically, there's no sort of ghost score for this mode. You just play on until the *Snacman* player has lost all their lives in the usual fashion.

Snacman is fun, but wins no prizes. Damningly, the ghosts don't move in patterns, instead turning at the first available corner and making a nonsense of the whole *Pacman* structure. And the collision detection is dreadful, with ghosts deadly even through diagonally adjacent walls. How merry this makes things later on.

Bulgulators, by the way, is the title of a SAM Coupé game that *Snacman* almost, but not quite, exactly imitates. (Award yourself extra points for knowing what a SAM Coupé is, remarkably obscure and fundamentally flawed computer fans.)

***STF* RATING 41%**



Snacman, shmacman. It's the same old story, you're just getting near the end of a level and the bloody ghosts get you! Not that we're near the end.

BOOMROCK
LAPD – DISK G364

Creditably, this has very probably the best ever title for a *Boulderdash* game. On the minus side, it's a *Boulderdash* game. We've been sent so many of these, it took quite a while to ascertain whether we'd seen this one before. We've not. Probably.

Boomrock is an eight-level demo of the full Shareware version, and features everything you'd expect to find in *Boulderdash*. Boulders, for example.

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Boomrock adds nothing new to the already disgustingly common *Boulderdash* genre apart from a halfway original name. Even the neat amoebas can't save this from crushing predictability. Shame.

And dashing. It's also foolishly unpleasant to play, because joysticks are too sweeping to make the pedantic movements so vitally necessary to success and there's no keyboard option. The game has no surprises at all; years of exactly similar clones mean you can spot the deadfalls and tricksy chain reactions from half a screen away. There is a great bit where you're desperately trying to outrun amoebae flowing inexorably through a booby-trapped maze, but it hardly makes up for the crushing predictability of everything else.

***STF* RATING 26%**

A funny thing happened on the way to the gun shop, two of fat Larry's torpedoes tried to jump me - so I smoked 'em with me chopper. Blatta blatta blatta.

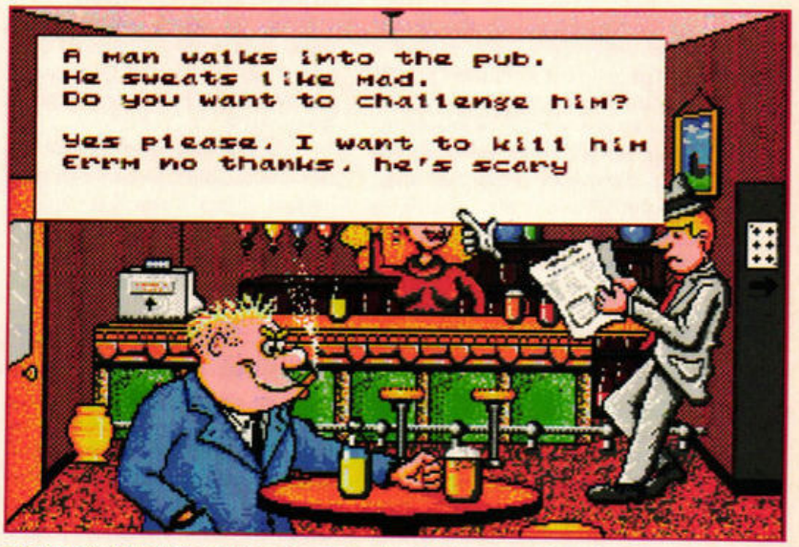
MOBSTERS CITY

MERLIN – DISK SS001

Cleverly avoiding the problems of correctly placing apostrophes by banning them completely, this licenceware point-and-click adventure manages to be both puerile and tedious at the same time. Here is what happens during a game:

Wait for title screen to draw. Press key. Disk accesses. Choose town to visit. Disk accesses. Look at pointless screen of man hailing taxi. Hail taxi. Disk accesses. Go to police station. Disk accesses. Examine wanted poster. Disk accesses. Note characteristics of criminal. Disk accesses. Hail taxi. Disk accesses. Go to gun shop. Disk accesses. Buy bullets. Hail taxi. Disk accesses. Go to local bar. Identify mobster. Challenge him to duel. Disk accesses. Wait for mobster to draw gun. Press mouse button to shoot first. Disk accesses. Drag body to police station. Receive piece of map. Disk accesses. Choose different town to visit, or carry on in same place because another mobster is now in the bar.

You're supposed to repeat this process 12 times in order to confront the big boss. You can talk to people, in which case you get a menu of random, entirely useless phrases to use. The responses are frighteningly unfunny, with a few jokes about gay men and busty women thrown in. Wahey. At least you can pass 15 minutes spotting all the cartoons and comic strips from which the graphics have been stolen. This is terrible, and quite stupidly nasty.



Mobsters City offers you the chance to offend all manner of people in a disturbingly random and puerile fashion. Can I stop this caption now please?

***STF* RATING 3%**

FALCON DEMOS

PAPA WAS A BLADERUNNER

FLOPPYSHOP – DISK F4446

Hurrah for pointlessly silly titles. The accompanying document file reveals, modestly, that this demo won first prize at the Intermedia Convention. Once again, it's hardly a laugh riot of fun and invention, but shows off the Falcon to a heartening degree. Once again again, it's the sound that lets the side down. The track's a longer sample from *Little Fluffy Clouds*, but, almost imperceptibly, the speed appears to change from moment to moment, creating an unpleasantly low, droning air.

The demo opens with a texture-mapped cube showing the programmers' logo zipping around the screen, before splitting to form a variety of uninteresting figures, including some smaller cubes and an Atari badge. The second and much longer part, informatively named "Z-buffering," involves a series of two snappily rendered shapes drifting around deceptively lazily, before plunging through each other and inducing watery queasiness in the viewer. The end. It's the kind of demo you occasionally reload wholly to see exactly what kind of power programmers are completely neglecting to use.

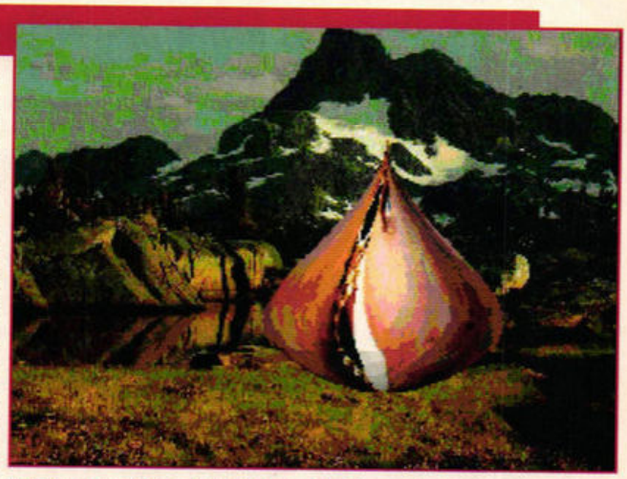
***STF* RATING 59%**

ARRIVAL

FLOPPYSHOP – F4447

Clever title, eh? It's Passion's first demo on the Falcon, you see. The intro screen promises plenty more to come. Mmmm. But anyway.

Arrival makes a bad first impression with its soundtrack. Just one sample, looped, but missing a beat as it does so, thus rendering it the aural equivalent of being viciously repeatedly beaten over the head with a stick. Fortunately, a flick of the volume control enables you to enjoy the rest of the demo in stick-free silence. And, while short, it's technically impressive. Frequently arousing suspicions that the effect on the screen is being read from a prepared table rather than calculated in real-time, yes, but impressive nonetheless. Some smart 3D modelling, a couple of fast-moving textured landscapes, and some predictable but very neat picture manipulation all go to show off the Falcon's graphics. But best of all is the rotating, solid jelly cube that wobbles and warps as it spins as it, er, washes. Or something. Roll on the promised sequels.



The trouble with *Arrival* is that while the rendered landscapes and the wobbly jelly shapes are impressive the sound track pierces your consciousness like the Devil's own dental drill. So kill the sound and hum to yourself.

***STF* RATING 50%**

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DISK MAGAZINES

NOVA 1
JAMES BIRD

Nova 1 is the first issue of a disk based magazine for fans of *Star Trek, Star Trek: the Next Generation* and *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine,* it also promises to cover the new series *Star Trek: Voyager* when it appears in early 1995. Because this is the first issue of the disk there are a few sections that need padding out a bit, and the *STOS* libraries take up a large proportion of the disk – nearly 250K – that could be better served being used for the actual disk magazine data itself rather than the *STOS Basic* shell. The viewer program is also incompatible with some versions of TOS which could lead to disappointment.

That said, the information contained in the magazine is almost completely up to date and there are some good digitised pictures from some of the episodes of *TNG* and *DS9*. A good spread of articles, reviews, pictures and stories make this disk of great interest to *Star Trek* fans, along with a classified advertising section and a directory of all Forbidden Planet shops and the Sheffield Space Centre where you can get *Star Trek* goods – but what about Forever People in Bristol then?

This disk is a must for *Star Trek* fans and could be the basis of a large network of fans. It's good but it could be much better with a little more care and attention to detail.

***STF* RATING 73%**

If you want to get a copy of *Nova* then send £1 and an sae to James Bird, Nova Disk, 91 Elm Tree Avenue, Kilburn, Belper, Derby DE56 ONN.

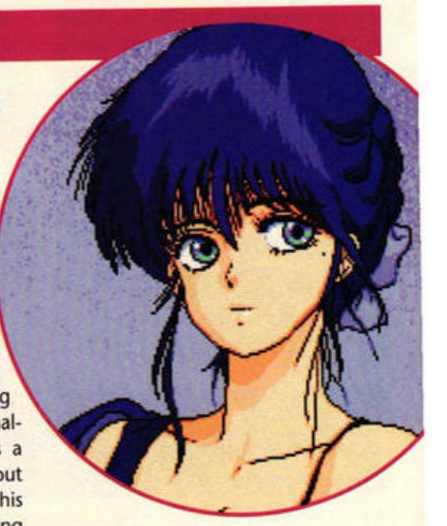
DEMOS

TRIBAL DEMO
FLOPPYSHOP – DISK DEM-4356

Unsurprisingly featuring a tribal drum-beaty sort of soundtrack, *Tribal Demo* gains marks for replacing the expected scrolling message with a couple of screens of text easily read at speed. More marks are awarded for the smart music control section, where you can adjust the bass and treble, and the highly emotional section appended to the predictable exploding lemming animation at the end.

There's this lemming right, and he dances a bit right, and it's dead funny OK? And then, it explodes - now that's what I call unexpected.

The demo itself falls short of recent efforts, and suspiciously appears to be written in BASIC if one of the credits is anything to go by. An unrhythmically dancing lemming links the very small number of parts, which consist of some swirling dots, a scrolling TOCMB (a handy acronym, standing for Typically Opthalmically Challenged Manga Babe, which saves a great deal of time when writing about demos, although obviously not in this establishing case), some swirling icons, an animation of someone waving their arms, the screens of text, another TOCMB and nothing else.



The size of a manga babe's eyes directly correlates to the likelihood of them being a city smashing demon - apparently.

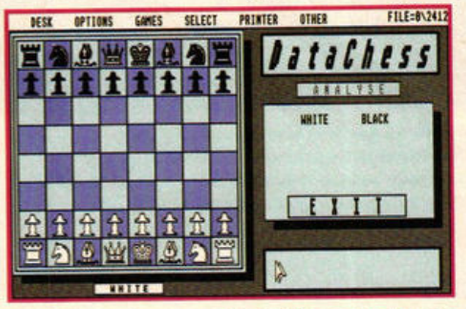
Hardly a chore to sit through, but definitely a once-only affair.

***STF* RATING 33%**

UTILITIES

DATA CHESS
GOODMAN

Data Chess 2 is much more than a simple chess program, it's a complete system of chess analysis because it consists of a complete suite of programs instead of a single chess playing game program. In fact, you can't use *Data Chess 2* to play games at all, the main purpose of *Data Chess 2* is to analyse the strategy of your own games and so improve your game. To do this you input details of games you have played and use the program functions to learn more about the way you play. Other features of the software include the ability to store details of over 2,700 games, print moves, replay games and print out full statistics games for detailed analysis. This is an interesting departure from the usual chess software available and is potentially very useful, mainly because there are details of over 1,000 games are supplied on a seperate data disk. The software is designed to run in both medium and high resolutions using a seperate version of the program for each resolution and needs 1MByte of RAM to work correctly.



The main screen of *Data Chess 2* enables to load over 1,000 saved games and analyse the way each game developed.

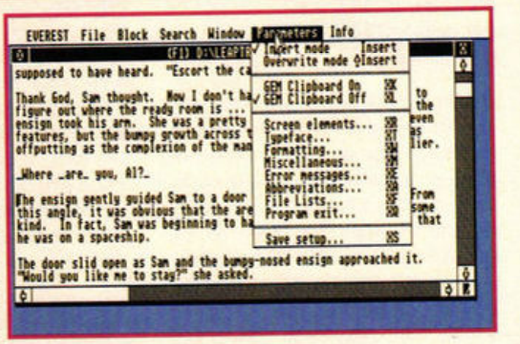
***STF* RATING 86%**

EVEREST
FLOPPYSHOP – DISK WRD3891

Everest is an easy to use text editor compatible with all Atari STs, the TT and the Falcon and is useful for creating plain ASCII text files for programming in C or assembler, creating text for input into DTP or specialised printing software like *Calamus, TeX* and *Pagestream,* and for editing standard text files.

Everest is very compatible, running on all STs and all available graphics cards without any problems, can use GDOS fonts and the Atari clipboard, can be used for files up to 300K in size and can edit up to ten files at once. Add to this a wide range of functions enabling you to switch between files, format files, select fonts and set up a range of abreviations and you have a very powerful piece of software at your fingertips. *Everest* comes highly recommended.

***STF* RATING 85%**



Everest is Shareware, so make sure you get your payment off to the author if you use the program on a regular basis - it's well worth the money.

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FALCON MUSIC

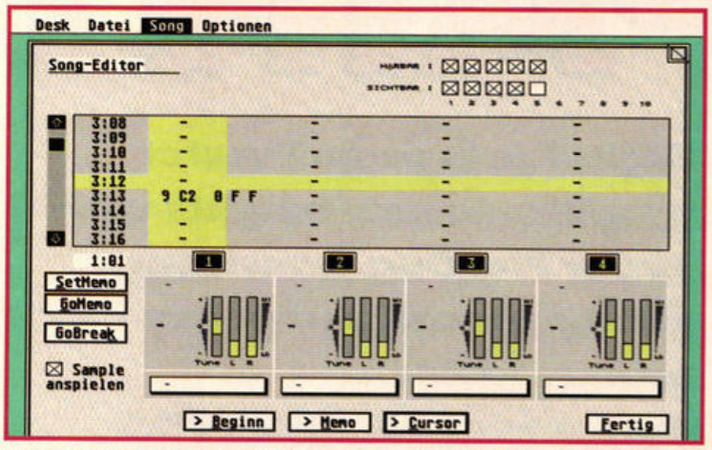
MJUZAKK

FLOPPYSHOP – DISK F4457

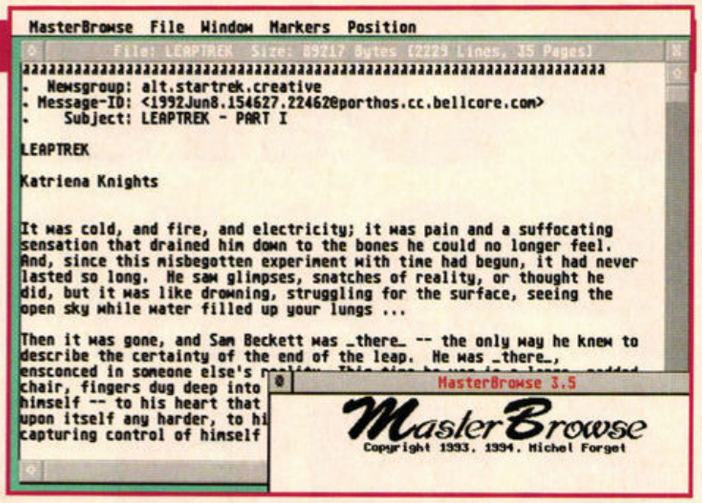
Trackers are becoming more and more popular on the Falcon, mainly because of the superb sound reproduction available through the audio sub-system. Sadly, this tracker program from Germany is supplied with some quite dodgy – but large – samples for you to work with that rather spoil the effect. The editor itself is the usual setup with plenty of options for assigning samples and events and creating your own songs using up to ten tracks, easy to get to grips with as long as you know the function of each button, menu item and option. Unfortunately the entire program is in German making it difficult for the average non-German speaking Falconer to use. Luckily the documentation is loosely translated into English so you can learn how to use it.

With some clearer samples and an English tranlation of the software itself, *Mjuzakk* has the potential to become one of the best trackers around for any 4MByte Falcon.

***STF* RATING 68%**



Using up to ten tracks using frequencies up to 49KHz, *Mjuzakk* may become the benchmark among trackers on the Falcon - shame about the silly name.



Yet another incarnation for an old favourite, *Master Browse* is dragged screaming and kicking into 1994.

FALCON MASTER BROWSE 3.5

FLOPPYSHOP – DISK F4450

No apologies for covering *Master Browse* again in the PD pages because this latest version has been specially updated to be completely Falcon compatible. Apart from the obvious Falcon enhancements and utilities, *Master Browse* now contains new features that makes it even more versatile than it was before. You can now print all, odd or even pages of a document so you can use both sides of your paper when printing, disable form-feeds after a page is printed, you can print a synopsis of a file when saving or printing and *Master Browse* now "remembers" the configuration from the last time you used the program.

When you consider that *Master Browse* is already one of the best text editors available for the ST and Falcon with a remarkable range of editing features, then these additions really make the program that much more usable.

***STF* RATING 88%**

FALCON UTILITIES

FLOPPYSHOP

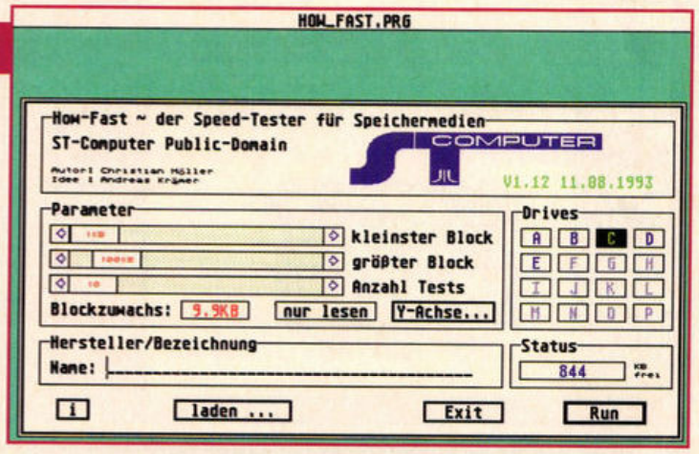
DISK F4406

It's pretty difficult to highlight one specific utility from this compilation disk of 37 different programs to show off this selection of bits and pieces. Mixed among the goodies on the disk is a small program enabling you to rename files by using "illegal" characters – but don't use a question mark or you'll end up in trouble – and another that enables you to join two files together.

Another handy program enables you to dump your disk directory to a printer in the smallest text size possible, this means you get between 8MBytes and 10MBytes of directory printed on a single page so you can generate a complete file list for an 80MByte drive in under ten pages

Probably the most interesting programs from a technical point of view are *Sysinfo* and *How-Fast*. *Sysinfo* give all kinds of internal system information about your Falcon while *How-Fast* rates the speed of your hard drive including the average seek time and the data transfer rate. Some pretty good stuff.

***STF* RATING 83%**



Ok, see how fast your Falcon hard drives work using this excellent utility called, er, *How-Fast*. A lot of thought went into that, obviously.

THE *ST FORMAT* PD DIRECTORY

16/32 PDL, 173 High Street, Strood, Kent ME2 4TW ☎ 0634 710788
A-ONLINE ATARI CEC, 1229 East Mohawk Avenue, Tampa, FL 33604 USA ☎ 010 813 237 1656
AQUILA, 190a Mackenzie Road, Beckham, Kent BR3 4SF ☎ 081 778 00844
ATARI USER GROUP(SCOTLAND), 9/3 North Hillhousefield, Edinburgh EH6 4HU ☎ 031 553 1288
AWF PDL, 123 Hazelwell Crescent, Stirchley, Birmingham B30 2QE ☎ 021 458 4345
BALSALL PD, 6 Rushton Close, Balsall Common, Coventry. CV6 7PA
BLYTHE PDL, Copes Farm, Withington, Leigh, Stoke on Trent, Staffs ST10 4PU
CHAOS PD ☎ 0296 89059
CALEDONIA PDL 250 Oldtown Road, Hilton, Inverness IV2 4PT ☎ 0463 225736
DIGITAL DISK,Steve Hill, 85 Ceres Road,Plumstead,London SE18 1HL
EMERALD CITY, PO Box 28, Southhants SO9 7HS ☎ 0703 672577
FALCON OWNERS GROUP, 10 Oak Drive, Portishead, Bristol, Avon BS20 8QS ☎ 0275 843241
FaST CLUB, 2 Broadway, Nottingham NG11 1PS ☎ 0602 410 241FERDY BLASET, Halleyweg 114,3318 CP Dordrecht, The Netherlands ☎ 010 3178 172 879
FLOPPYSHOP, PO Box 273, Aberdeen AB9 8SJ ☎ 0224 312756
GL-PD 62 Colwyn Ave, Winch Wen, Swansea SA1 7EJ ☎ 0792 799762
GOODMAN PDL, 16 Conrad Close, Meir Hay Estate, Longton, Stoke on Trent, Staffs ST3 1SW ☎ 0782 335650
LAPD, PO Box 2, Heanor, Derbyshire DE75 7YP ☎ 0773 761944
MAGNETIC FIELDS, PO Box 118, Preston, Lancs PR2 2AW ☎ 0772 881190
MERLIN PD, 11Grange Close, Minchinhampton, Stroud, Glos GL6 9DF ☎ 0453 882793
PD4U, 4 Sintonville Avenue, Belfast, BT5 5DG ☎ 0232 672338
RIVERDENE PDL, 30a School Road, Tilehurst, Reading, Berkshire RG3 5AN ☎ 0734 452416
SDPD c/o Stephen Day, 11 Allington Mead, Bridport, Dorset DT6 5HF ☎ 0308 427179

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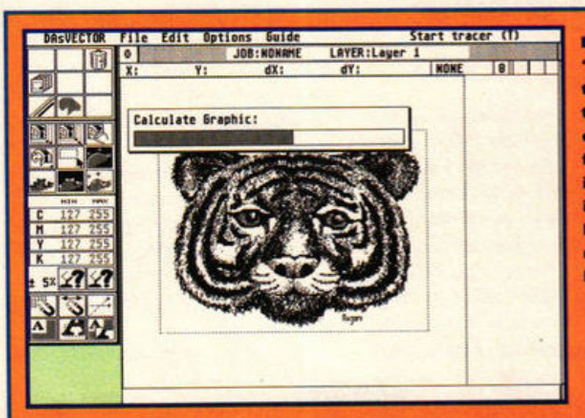
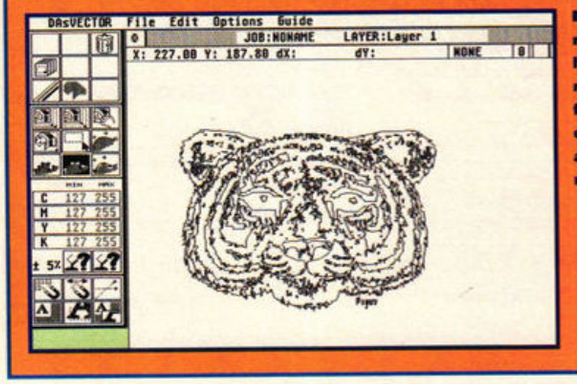
POINTS, POLYGONS AND PAINT



The "Vectoriser" traces outlines from imported images like this mono IMG.



The results however need a fair bit of manual adjustment.

Digital Arts propel vector graphics to new heights with *Vector Pro*. Dug Armstrong climbs aboard and pokes around inside...

Digital Arts' *Vector Pro* is the latest in a new generation of software on the Atari platform, a richly featured GEM-based program which offers impressive graphic design facilities on ST, TT and Falcon machines (see the ratings box on page 43). *Vector Pro* has evolved from the original *DA Vector* (see the review in *ST FORMAT* 48, turn to page 92 if you missed your copy), and now touts a range of enhanced and entirely new capabilities.

The package is intended, primarily, for the production of vector graphics to a professional standard, and is aimed at designers and artists at all skill levels. It is also of interest to anyone keen on simple animation right up to digital video production.

Can you handle it?

Vector Pro's memory requirements and display prefer an advanced system. Falcon owners are fortunate to be able to exploit the true colour display and high resolution which shows the program at its best, but an ST needs to run in high res mono to achieve the minimum 640x400 screen size. This is not so awful when you realise that *Vector Pro's* internal data format is entirely represented in true colour, regardless of the display attributes. An ST with 2MBytes and a high res monitor is all you really need to get started. However, at least 4MBytes and an add-on graphics card makes a big difference and is mandatory for serious work.

"A richly featured GEM-based program which offers impressive graphic design facilities on the ST, TT and Falcon"

Getting it in...

The first thing you notice when installing *Vector Pro* is the lack of an installation routine. Instead, self-extracting TOS archives have to be copied to a directory on the hard drive and executed from the Desktop. This is simple stuff to those used to

EXCHANGEABLE FILE FORMATS

Vector formats (Import)

ADF – Acorn Archimedes vector graphic
CVG – *Calamus* mono
DIG – *Didot* Vectorgraphic
GEM – GEM Metafile
HTV – DA's native format for vector objects
RVP – DA's Repro format

Vector formats (Export)

All import formats plus:
EPS – Encapsulated Postscript object

Font Formats (Import only)

CFN – *Calamus* font
DFN – *Didot* font
PFB – PostScript Type 1 font outline *
PFM – Postscript Type 1 font metric *

Picture Formats (Native)

TIC – TIFF true colour picture
TIH – TIFF halftone block
TIM – TIFF mono block
TIP – TIFF palette picture

Picture Formats (Output)

All native formats plus:
IMG – GEM mono image
TIF – TIFF 5.0 picture

Picture Formats (Import)

All native and output formats plus:

CRG – *Calamus* Raster Graphic *
PI1 – *Degas* low res pic *
PI2 – *Degas* med res pic *
PI3 – *Degas* high res pic *
PAC – STAD mono pic *
PIC – Uncompressed screen grab *
TGA – Targa true colour picture *
(* – requires conversion using supplied utility)

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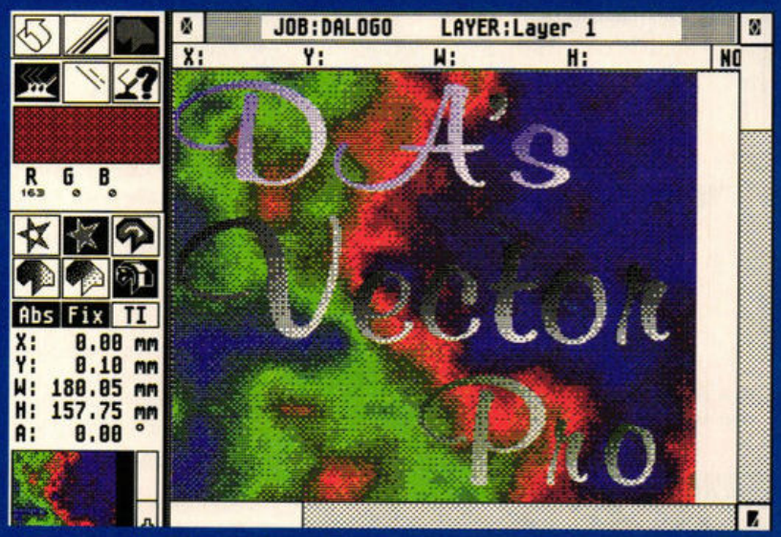
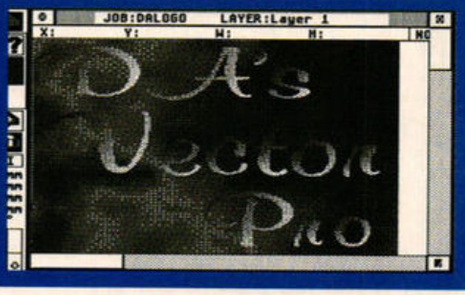
WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET



■ 16 colours give a fast display but with limited visualisation of the end result.



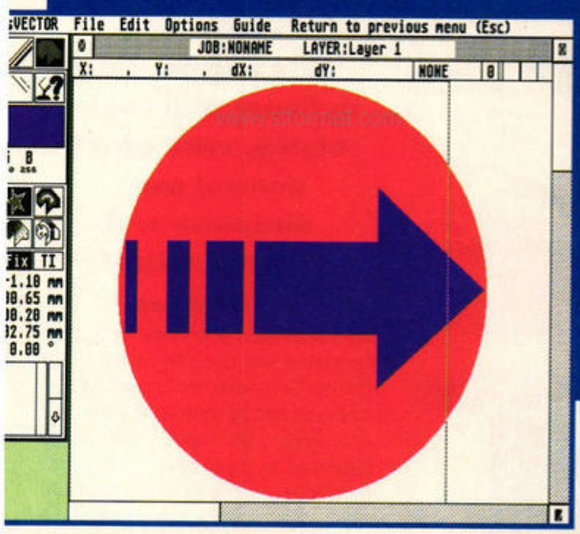
■ On a standard ST, a high res image is displayed. Good enough for monochrome tasks.

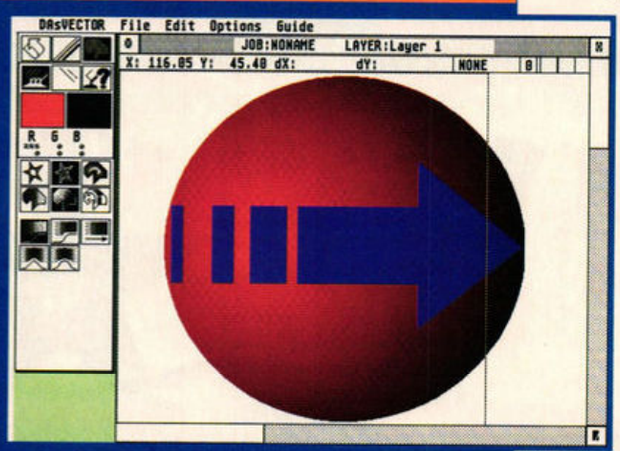
■ 256 colours are an excellent compromise for most drawings.

■ True colour displays offer WYSIWYG quality, but take longer redraw.

Do it professionally... and fill it!

Graduated or gradient fills enable you to add lifelike textures and lighting to ordinary shapes. A colour gradient is a progression from one colour to another via a series of intermediate steps. In *Vector Pro* you simply set the start and end colours, the style and direction of fill, and off it goes. In the example, a few mouse clicks are all that's required to give a 3D look to a flat graphic.





■ A continuous colour fill makes circles and curves look flat.

■ A graduated fill gives them depth and texture, turning circles into spheres.

fiddling around with files, but anyone just beginning to get to grips with GEM might be put off by the lack of instructions for setting up.

Once the archives have discharged their contents, the installation is complete. The screen mode can be chosen freely depending on how you want to use *Vector Pro*, but in practice your system memory and the minimum screen size (see above) limits your choice. If you have the memory, screen expanders such as BlowUp030 (£17.95 System Solutions ☎ 081 693 3355) and accelerators like NVDI (£49.95 also System Solutions) can be used to improve performance. If your interest lies in colour work, at least 256 colours are required to visualise your creations properly.

If you've used the original *DA's Vector* program you can rest assured that the layout of menus and toolbars is very similar in *Vector Pro*. All the new features have been well integrated and in general the program has an intuitive feel. In contrast, the printed manual describes *Vector Pro* in the form of a separate section, making it somewhat disjointed. There is no index either, but there is on-line help – an Accessory called KNOW-HOW which has a very handy alphabetical list of topics.

Of course, you don't need to read the manual before using *Vector Pro*. If you've used any kind of vector drawing software in the past, many of the concepts of object selection and manipulation of points, paths, lines and attributes introduced are very similar. If not, the on-line tutorial is recommended to walk you through the basics. It also serves as a good introduction to some of the enhanced features.

First the bad news ...

Although *Vector Pro* is an improved version of *DA's Vector*, there are still a few niggles which haven't been sorted out. The most glaring omission is the lack of a "Global Undo" option. This is a handy way of going back a step in your work if you make a mistake. As it is, frequent

"An ST with 2MBytes and a high res monitor is all you really need to get started"

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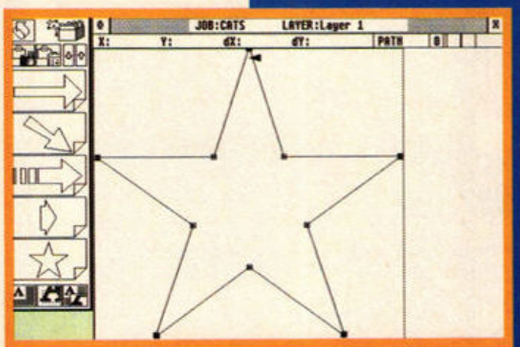
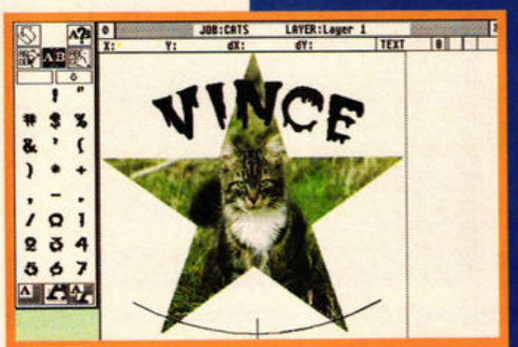
HOW TO DO IT!

Combining techniques in Vector Pro for fast results

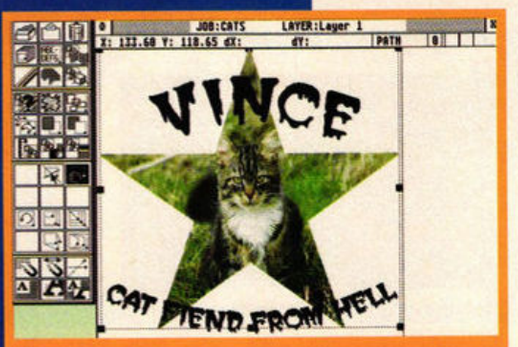


1 Start by selecting a basic vector shape from the library.

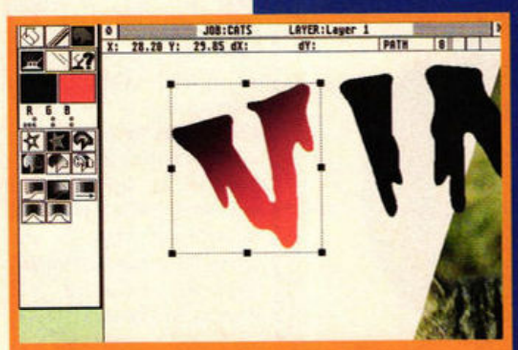
2 Now fill this star outline with a suitably scanned moggie.



3 Using the Path Text option, a *Calamus* font is imported and laid over the shape.

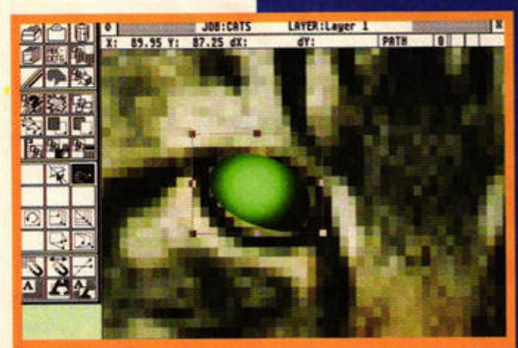


4 All text is now in place and converted to vector curves.



5 A blood effect on this letter shape can be created by using a directional graduated fill.

6 This process is repeated across all of the text shapes.



7 A tiny green sphere gives the eyes a rather eerie cast.

8 A filled background is added to create the final image.

saves and multiple work files are the order of the day. Another omission is the lack of an explicit "convert text object to curves" command. *Vector Pro* can accept Postscript Type One and *Calamus* fonts, transforming them into vectorised curves which can then be manipulated like any other vector graphic. This is a useful feature, but the problem is that initially, text is treated as a special object with different attributes, and, although you can change the line and area settings, some of the other functions require that a conversion is performed to change the text object into a graphic first.

The manual claims this is done automatically, but this doesn't always happen when you want it to. For instance, when you want to use a complex fill on a textual logo, you have to perform an "Ungroup" or "3D extrude" on the text object first, which can have unwanted side effects. Having a toolbar icon which simply converted the text on demand would give you better control. Similarly, the ability to create an "Object List" of named components in your drawing would help out a lot with the selection of object groups.

Now the good bits

Despite these drawbacks, many of the new features make up for any deficiencies. The "Vectoriser," which traces bitmapped images to produce vector shapes, has been upgraded to accept high resolution monochrome GEM IMG files, after they have been converted into the TIM format using the built-in converter. These TIM pictures can also be used as fill patterns.

"Fills can be done in linear and radial styles, with great control over direction and fill algorithm"

Area fills have also been improved to a professional standard. Previously, graduated or gradient fills were only possible by creating a bitmapped graphic and using it as a picture fill. Now you can directly specify start and end colours, *Vector Pro* fills in the shape with all the intermediate shades. Setting the display mode to 256 colour steps really shows these off. Fills can be done in linear and radial styles, with great control over direction and fill algorithm. And of course, these are ren-

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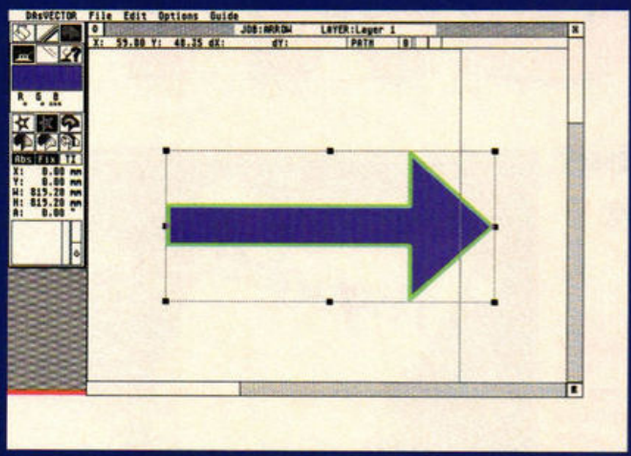
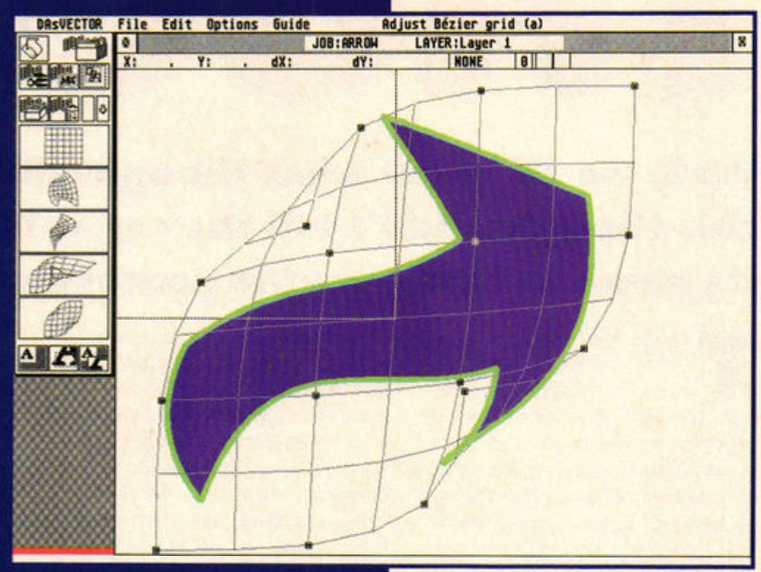
Warped imagination



The Bezier Net Transform function warps the shape across an imaginary surface.



Vector Pro can add very interesting effects to simple shapes.

dered for output in true colour, which eliminates colour banding (stripes), if your output device can cope. Other enhancements include colour blending, a weird effect whereby the vector is "morphed" from one curve to another as a sequence of colour steps.

Showing it off

Digital Arts have noted the need for animation in a program of this type. Most vector-based professional drawing tools offer the ability to produce a series of on-screen pictures as a "slideshow," and *Vector Pro* is no exception. Indeed, the advanced animation features put most of the competition to shame. A "camera" or mobile viewpoint has added many possibilities to the original concept.

As well as simple movement, *Vector Pro's* camera has a zoom facility, and can move along a predefined vector path. This makes adding movement to an animation very simple, and the impressive range of colour and picture filters suggests many different fading and lighting effects. An entire section of the manual describes how even digital video productions may be created with the appropriate hardware.

Let's not forget...

One aspect of *Vector Pro* sits quietly in the background, waiting for discovery, until you find the Print facility. The printed output is superb, particularly on detailed image and gradient fills. Testing was on an Hewlett Packard LaserJet 2, although a number of printers are supported, including the Atari SLM 804/605, Canon CLC 10 and Epson 24 pin range. The ability to export Encapsulated PostScript (EPS) files directly opens up access to professional printing and design services.

The Bottom Line

In price and performance terms, *Vector Pro* offers a great deal. Not only does it stand out in the realm of the ST, it also compares favourably with more expensive software for PC and Mac platforms. Although sometimes idiosyncratic, the range of features cannot be ignored by anyone interested in graphic design. This is not a package simply for preparing clip-art for DTP applications, though it does that very well. It is a complete design system which fits well into DA's emerging family of graphic software.

DUG ARMSTRONG

The juicy bits

Animation Editor
Camera feature enables recording window to be moved and zoomed, vastly simplifying basic movement. Filter functions can be applied to camera views to create complex effects like fades, overlays and colour transitions.

Area Attributes
Fill function now supports more efficient linear and radial gradient fills, colour blending and monochrome fill patterns. Colour steps option gives better control over graduated fill display. Fill pattern loader has more control over external bitmaps and offers auto-loading of a series of images for animation.

Bezier Net Transform
This is a very powerful facility that now supports loading of multiple Bezier net libraries.

Multi-Copier
Fixed or variable rotation centre. Fill pattern change and Calculator Transform with each new copy.

Vectoriser
This enables you to trace monochrome TIM pictures.

DA's Vector Pro

£249 from CGS ComputerBild ☎ 081 679 7307.£99 upgrade from *DA's Vector*. All Ataris with at least 2MBytes of RAM, ST requires high res monitor.TOS 4.04 recommended for Falcon030. Hard drive required.

Highs
- Loaded with features.
- Good performance.
- Flexible import and export.

Lows
- Docs could be better.
- Lack of some basic features.
- Occasionally erratic while running.

90%

What else?
- *DA's Layout CD* and *DA's Repro* £299/£499 for mono and colour versions from CGS Computerbild.
- More of a page processing tool, formerly known as *Didot Professional Calamus SL*, £499 from JCA Europe Ltd on ☎ 0734 452416.

TOS ALERT!

No, not a Desktop error message but a word of caution to Falcon owners. There are problems between *Vector Pro* and TOS 4.01 which can result in memory shortages after loading. This has a direct impact on the screen size, display colours and drawing complexity available. CGS have recommended that your Falcon is upgraded to TOS 4.04 prior to using *Vector Pro*.

TOS, apart from being the cue for a number of well-worn puns, is of course the operating system ROM (Read Only Memory), a small chip which plugs in below the memory board of your Falcon's interior. You can find out which TOS version you have by double-clicking on the General Setup CPX in your Desktop Control Panel. Selecting the Status button shows you the version number and date of your TOS.

Alas, if you are stuck with 4.01, you may have some difficulty obtaining an upgrade. The euphemism "couldn't give a TOS" (sorry, you were warned about the puns) seems particularly suited to Atari in more ways than one, especially as they seem rather reluctant to supply dealers with replacement ROMS. Your best bet is to contact the dealer who supplied your Falcon and ask them to look around for you. If they can't help, contact Atari UK directly on ☎ 0753 533344 and ask for upgrade details. Oh, incidentally, this procedure is sometimes known as "arguing the TOS."

For those of you who have 4.04, however, you can TOS caution to the four winds (I know, I know – I'm sorry) and look forward to exploring the wonderful world of *Vector Pro* unhindered.

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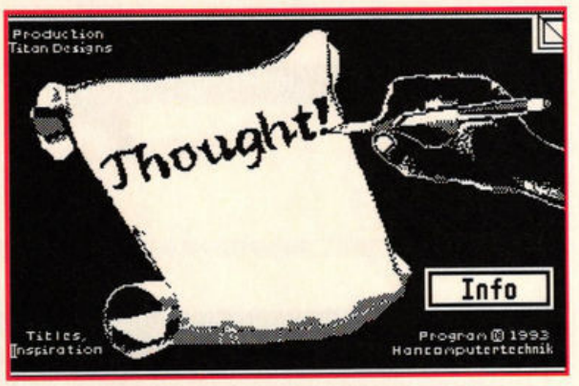
THOUGHT!

Well, we all know what thought did but this thought didn't kill the cat, it lent its name to this versatile processor



The "About Thought!..." Box, not the prettiest part of this package!

Thought! describes itself as an "ideas processor," it's a mixture of a database, filing system, operating shell, with a hint of *Hypercard* thrown in for good measure. Initially designed as an aid to programming software, *Thought!* also incorporates a more general mode, which can be used to plan your next best seller, organise moving house, build your family tree, as a diary, a catalogue, a phone book, even a Desktop replacement.

The majority of new software consists of new implementations of old ideas. *Thought!* is quite different – it's a highly original item.

What's it all about?

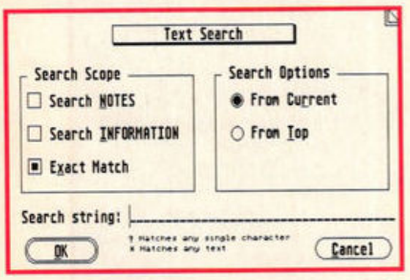
Thought! operates in two modes, or models; general and programmer. The two are similar, both create structures, a cross between a family tree and the Desktop file system. They consist of symbols, linked together in a hierarchy, which are displayed in a GEM window as connected boxes. Up to four structures can be open at one time. If a structure's window is closed, it can be reopened with a simple click on a Desktop icon. A toolbox at the top of the window enables you to manipulate these boxes by deleting, copying, adding new ones, moving them, and so on. A right mouse click on some symbols decomposes them. This simply takes you to a new "page," with the clicked symbol now at the top of the tree. A little like opening a folder at the Desktop, symbols can be nested in this way to a maximum of 16 levels.

Double clicking on any symbol summons the Edit Object dialog box. Here you can edit the text to be displayed in each symbol box a maximum of four lines of text which serve as a title or brief description of the symbol. Also by clicking the Notes button summons the Editor Window you can store a fuller account of the symbol.

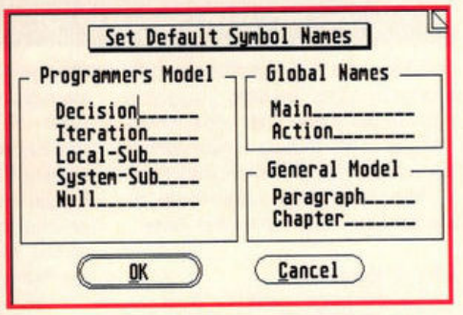
The Action Link, one of the more powerful features of *Thought!*, enables you to specify one of up to ten programs to be launched from the main window. Having specified which program, you can designate a file to be automatically loaded by that program, providing it reads its command line, with the File Link. For instance, setting the Action Link to *1st Word*, and the File Link to a text file runs *1st Word*, with the text file automatically loaded. Using the Information button opens another Editor Window where more detailed command lines can be entered. Once set up, highlighting the Call icon in the toolbox and clicking on the symbol calls the program into action.

"A mixture of a database, filing system, operating shell, with a hint of hypercard thrown in for good measure"

If you're producing a document with your favourite text editor, art package, DTP, screen grabber, you can call them all with a few clicks of the mouse, and all with the correct files automatically loaded. One use for *Thought!* which immediately springs to mind is as a shell for all those different archivers, from arc to zip through lzh. The Notes Editor Window can be used to store the meanings of each instruction, and your regular settings stored in Information. This saves cluttering up your disks with all those shells, and trying to remember all the different command line instructions. More than one Link File would have been useful – a rather surprising omission since *Thought!* itself can accept two or more files on its command line. Also the ability to load files into the Editor Window would save a lot of re-typing.

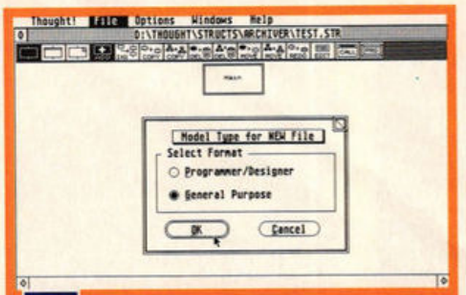


Thought! searches through a whole structure for that lost text.

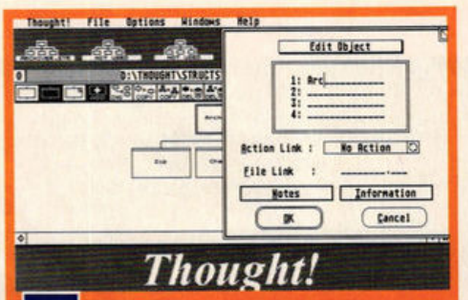


The dialog box above determines the text inside a symbol when it is first created.

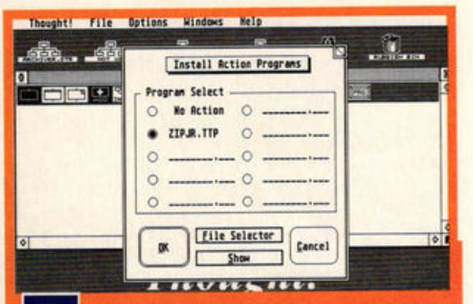
CREATING A THOUGHT STRUCTURE



1 First tell *Thought!* which type of structure you need. It then opens a window displaying one Main symbol.



2 Further symbols can be added, and their titles edited in the Edit Object dialog box.



3 Clicking on the PRG toolbox enables you to specify which files you may want to launch from within your structure.

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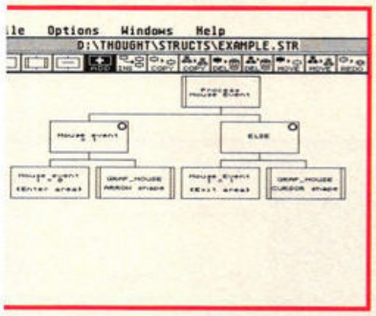
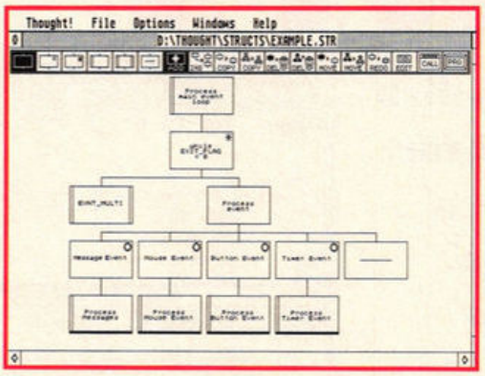
■ The *Thought!* toolbox. The three symbol types are at the far left, followed by the various move and delete tools. The last three boxes are the action icons - once you've set up a structure, *Thought!* is go!



■ ...a data structure showing how mouse clicks might be processed.



■ A Programmer Structure showing how evnt_multi may be symbolised. Clicking on the Process Mouse Event takes us to...

The programmer module differs from the general module only in the range of symbols available. These are constructed to enable you to build Jackson data structure designs – a form of program planner, dreamed up by Michael Jackson (no, not that one), along the lines of flow charts. There are quite a few different types of program design diagrams, including Warnier diagrams and data flow designs, so the programmer aspect of *Thought!* is rather specialised, certainly when compared to the general mode which is, just that, very general.

Jackson data structures are very useful tools for planning and designing software. They encourage you to organise your program into its component tasks, these are then divided into further tasks until a level is reached where you can begin programming. This makes it easier to keep the end result in mind, while concentrating on the intricacies of the actual code. *Thought!* handles this very well, there are symbols for decisions for iteration (perform the symbols below a number of times), and for sub-routines, which can be decomposed to reveal the structure of the tasks they in their turn perform. If you use structured design, or think you should, then *Thought!* is a valuable aid. It should certainly save a lot of paper.

"*Thought!* is quite different - it's a highly original item"

How does it do it?

Thought! is well designed and easy to use but is awkward in places. The dialog boxes are fly dials and work very smoothly. Outside the dialog boxes, *Thought!* is very mouse oriented. More use of the keyboard could have been made <Tab> to cycle through the symbols and the function keys to select the toolboxes, for example. While there are short cuts for the main menu options, detailed in the manual, they are not shown on the menu drop-downs themselves.

In addition the mouse action is not always intuitive. We're used to the close button on a window taking us back one level in the same way as on the Desktop where a window is only closed if you are at the root directory. *Thought!* closes the whole structure wherever you are, in consequence we often found ourselves shutting a structure down by accident, and being faced with a disappearing window.

One aspect that lets *Thought!* down is its directory handling. Most shells enables you to set the default directory before launching a program. With some GEM Desktops and many Desktop replacements it is possible to install Lattice C to run whenever a .C file is double-clicked. By installing Lattice to take the top window as the default dir, it can be set to load the correct .PRJ and .INF files – saving many hours of file hunting. A similar set up with *Thought!* isn't possible – certainly a limitation for any shell-like program.

Hopefully a future version can incorporate this. *Thought!'s* manual isn't very clear, the tutorial skips over many features and there is no step-by-step guide to using the Action Link. *Thought!* provides support for GDOS and SpeedoGDOS, and if MultiTOS is installed, several programs can be launched together.

Aspects of thought

Thought! is still in its infancy. It is certainly a very good idea and has many uses. The implementation of it is OK, but this can be developed in many directions. We're hopeful that in future versions, we are going to have a package that is not just very useful, but downright indispensable.

Secondly, it is has a split personality. Half of it wants to be a variation on *Hypercard,* with a strong emphasis on planning projects. With more bells and whistles, the ability to display pictures which has been promised could be a very good variation. The other half is a programmer's tool. Although this was the original purpose, *Thought!* has expanded so much that this side should really be a specialised subset of what for many is its main use, as a general project planner/organiser. It's doubtful the majority of users would even look at the programmer model.

Verdict

Thought! is bristling with potential – certainly a package to watch out for. If your work regularly involves projects that require detailed planning or switching between programs, then you may well find it a godsend. If you're a programmer and use Jackson structures, or anything similar, or you feel it's about time you did, then *Thought!* is the package for you.

TONY WAGSTAFF

Thought!

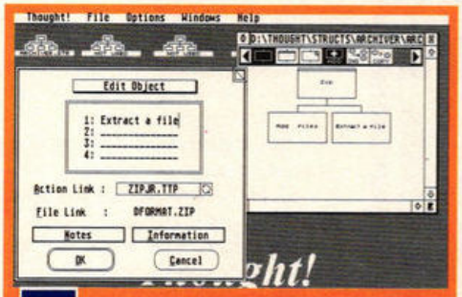
£69.95 Titan Designs
☎ 021 414 1630
High res minimum

Highs
- Highly original.
- An extremely useful tool.

Lows
- Could be made easier to use.

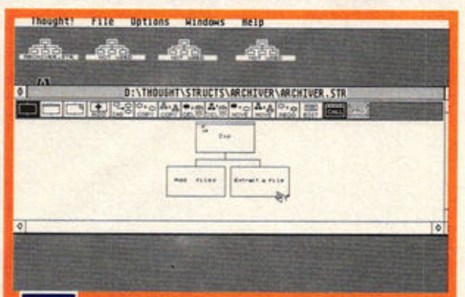
What else?
- There's nothing else quite like it.

86%



4 Inside the Edit Object, we can install the zip file on any symbol, and also the file we need to unzip as the File Link.

5 An $ indicates the start of the command enabling other comments and !S! substitutes the File Links.



6 Unzipping the file is now as easy as selecting the CALL Toolbox, and clicking on the symbol.

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CLARITY 16

There is plenty of direct-to-disk recording software around for the Falcon, but what about a good old sampling package? Trust Microdeal to come up with the goods...

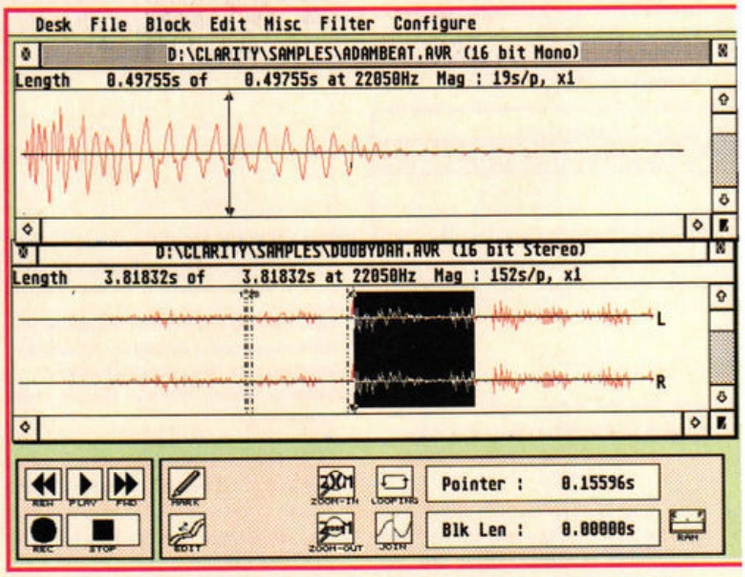
Microdeal and budget sampling packages for Atari computers go together like politicians and sex scandals. Over the last few years the company has produced *Stereo Replay*, *Stereo Master*, and *Replay 16* to name but a few of the ST sound applications. The latter is a highly regarded hardware-software combination; and if you've got the *Breakthru* sequencer as well as *Replay 16*, you can sample sounds into you ST and play them back while driving external MIDI synthesizers. It was inevitable, then, that *Clarity Falcon* should appear. The title echoes Microdeal's mediocre *Clarity 16* sampling package for the Amiga, but the program is all Atari: *Clarity Falcon* is, by all accounts, *Replay 16* ported from the ST.

A problem solved

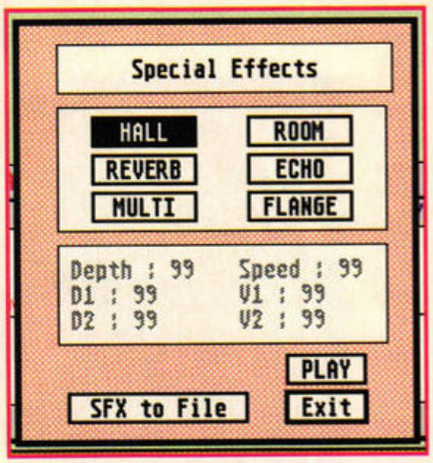
AVR, the developers behind the package, have their own cure for one of the niggles raised by the Falcon's design. To get sound into the machine it has to be input through the infuriatingly impractical stereo microphone socket at the rear. AVR include a special lead in this package that not only turns the mic input into a standard two channel phono input (the kind you find round the back of your hi-fi), it also adapts the socket to receive high-level line signals directly from your CD or Tape outputs.

The first thing you are going to want to do with *Clarity* is sample something from your CD collection. Maybe a drum loop from that James Brown compilation. Hook the Falcon up to the hi-fi, boot-up the sample editor program, then zip up to the file menu to create a New Sample. An empty window opens – James is going to fill this. Hit record, and a box appears. Here you can monitor the level of your signal with an oscilloscope, or listen to it to ensure you're going to be lifting the right bit. You can't do both at the same time, which is slightly odd – it was this way on the ST version, and AVR haven't changed it. If the incoming signal is too loud, it can be adjusted; if you don't want to start sampling until a certain threshold level is reached, that can be altered too.

When you hit the Sample button, the mouse pointer transforms into a microphone. Nothing else happens on the screen, which is a little disconcerting. At the end of the recording, James is illustrated as a red waveform in that once empty window. Now James is yours, you can cut bits of him off, paste bits of him on, set up markers and loop parts of him, reverse him, fade him in or out – all the options you might expect from a quality sample editor. As you play your soundfile, a pointer tracks the sound's passage through the window. This didn't happen with the ST version, and it's satisfying to see the implementation here.



An everyday sampling scenario with *Clarity 16*. A section of a vocal bite is just about to get the mangling treatment in the lower window.



The SFX box, with its six sample sweeteners and all manner of digits to tweak.

> **"Microdeal and budget sampling packages for Atari computers go together like politicians and sex scandals"**

Getting organised

Once you've spruced up and hacked about your samples, you can play them back in an organised manner using the Sample Sequencer. It's basically a cue list: a dog barks for two seconds, there's a pause for one second, James grunts a loop for three seconds, and so on. It does not support any type of external sync, so it cannot be used for any serious studio-type MIDI applications.

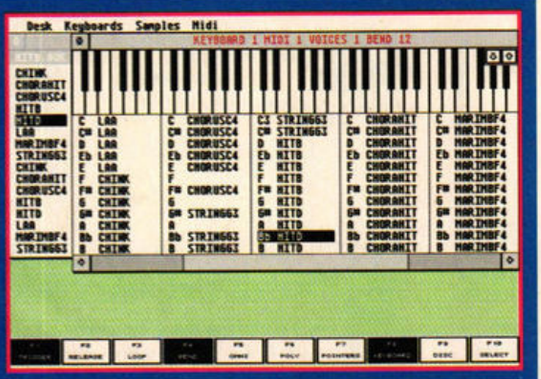
A version of the editor program for hard disk recording has been included as well. The two are virtually identical to use, though with the HD version editing of sounds is destructive or permanent.

The packaged Drumbeat editor turns your Falcon into a drum

A LITTLE NOTE-OFF?

MIDIplay is a bundled application which enables you to map up to 128 different samples (depending on the memory you have available, of course) across the entire synth keyboard range. Hook up a MIDI keyboard to the MIDI In port of your Falcon and the computer becomes a four note polyphonic sound source.

We had problems with the break up of sounds and stuck notes when we ran MIDIplay. Sometimes, the program locked up to MIDI altogether, until it was reset with a tap of the <Escape> key. It appears that this version of MIDIplay expects the wrong kind of MIDI note-off message. We were using a Novation MM-10 keyboard; AVR's Dave Woodhouse admitted that he had experienced problems with a Kawai K1 synth. He added that this was a problem that the programmer would be addressing. So until he does, MIDIplay is a no-go for most synth owners.



MIDIplay: map your samples across the entire keyboard range. Great, if only it recognised the right MIDI message.

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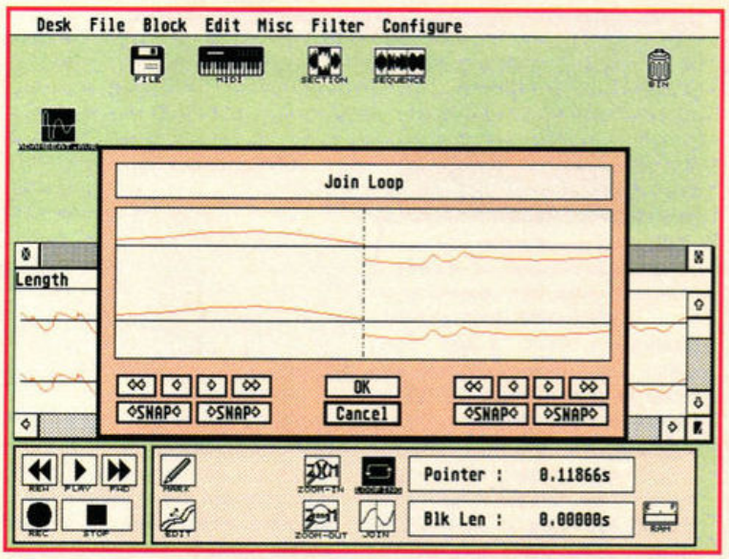
FOR FALCON

DSP SFX AOK

As with *Replay 16*, there's an SFX (Special Effects) section. The power of the mighty DSP (Digital Signal Processor) chip transforms what were feeble reverberation and echo effects on the ST into convincing audio enhancement on the Falcon. Two types of digital filtering – one fast and inaccurate, the other slow but spot-on – are featured too. You can use these to alter the timbre (harmonic quality) of your samples, reduce extraneous noise, or boost a specific band of frequencies. An option to calculate and draw a special graph showing the components of the sample over time, called an FFT chart, is included in the filter menu. However, every time we tried to perform the operation, the Falcon crashed during the calculation. We informed AVR's Dave Woodhouse about this: he said he has experienced no such problems.

machine. To use Drumbeat you need load up as many drum and percussion samples as you require – AVR have included a demo song and a kit worth of samples to get you started. Go to the Pattern Editor, select a channel and then click on the grid



■ Finding smooth loop points is one of the banes of sample life. With *Clarity 16*, you can get down to ridiculously accurate detail to get the loop just right.

against whichever sample you want triggered. Up to four samples on four different channels can be fired at any one time.

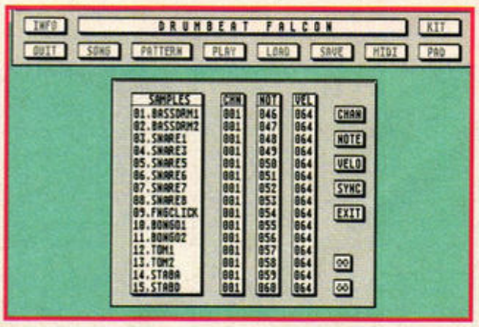
Once you have a few patterns written, they can be arranged to play back in song format. In addition, each sample can be assigned a MIDI note, channel and velocity, so as a song plays back it triggers any external sound module hooked up to the Falcon's MIDI Out port. Drumbeat can also be configured to transmit MIDI Clock but when it does this, it no longer sends out the note messages. It can receive Clock too, so your other MIDI sequencer (what, you only use your Falcon for sequencing? Ah...) can drive the Falcon.

Alternatively, the samples can be configured for triggering from external drum pads. Each sound is mapped to a MIDI note, channel and range of velocities: hit the drum pad lightly and you can fire off, say, a closed hi-hat; give it a good old thump and a crash cymbal may sound instead.

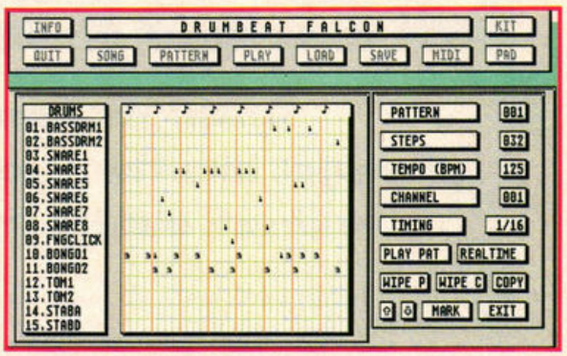
Finally, there's MIDIplay – see the box A Little Note-Off – and a small library of soundfiles – the same ones packaged with *Replay 16*, in fact. Try and play them, though, and up pops an alert box informing you that they're in the wrong format. You see, these are all mono files, and must be reconfigured to stereo before they cooperate with the Falcon. It seems rather lazy of AVR not to do this for you – Dave Woodhouse says this is a forthcoming correction.

What to do, then?

So, the big question: what exactly are you going to use *Clarity Falcon* for? You could use the Falcon as a simple four-voice pattern-based drum machine, or as a MIDI triggered drum module, but this is fatuous Falcon use when there are dedicated professional drum machines that are far more flexible and as cheap as *Clarity*.



■ Drumbeat again: this is where you assign your samples to specific channels and keys.



■ The Drumbeat editor: construct groovy patterns with up to four simultaneous percussion samples.

This program can serve two practical purposes. First, as an entry level direct-to-disk recording system system. A "hard disk" version of the editing software is included so you could record some lengthy audio files to a fat external drive, then manipulate them as you see fit using the excellent editing features. With analog and not digital inputs and outputs, you may experience some deterioration in your recordings.

> **"The program is all Atari: *Clarity Falcon* is, by all accounts, *Replay 16* ported from the ST"**

More significant is the lack of integration with MIDI. Alan Ackers, of Software Technology, told us that a version of *Breakthru* that's compatible with *Clarity Falcon* is several months away. So all this lovely audio you've got stored away in your Falcon can't be synchronised to anything else. This integration is found on the fabulous *Cubase Audio* – but that does cost £799.

The other use for *Clarity Falcon* would be as a four voice sampler. But it's the Drumbeat story again: you could buy an Akai S01 sampler with its 16 note polyphony, simple operating system and MIDI flexibilities for around 700 quid and you wouldn't have to worry about stuck notes and possible sound break up.

If you've got an ST, and you are happy with *Replay 16* and *Breakthru*, then forget about upgrading. *Clarity Falcon* can only really come into its own when a) Microdeal iron out all of the bugs, and b) when Software Technology bring out a *Breakthru*-style sequencer and sample playback package for the Falcon. And let's face it, if you're serious enough about your music to fork out for a Falcon, there's only one option for hard disk recording, and that's *Cubase Audio*.

DAVID ROBINSON

Clarity 16 for Falcon

£99.95 Microdeal
☎ 0525 718181

Highs
- Sensibly priced.
- Input adaptor and demo samples included.
- Great for experimenting with sounds.

Lows
- At present *Clarity* only works on Falcons with TOS 4.04.
- Can't be integrated with MIDI sequencer yet.
- Very limited serious applications.
- Demo samples don't work straight off.

What else?
- If you are set on audio sampling and integrated MIDI, *Cubase Audio* (*STF* 94%) is the only option – Harman ☎ 081 207 5050.

68%

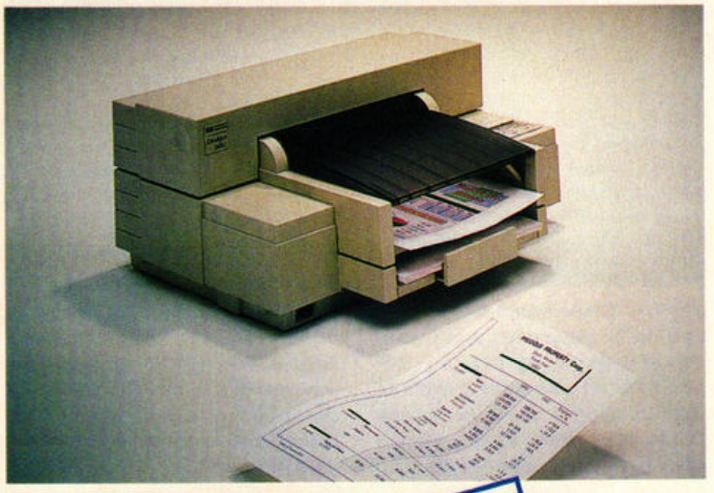
www.stformat.com

HEWLETT PACKARD DESKJET 560C

Gosh! Yet another new DeskJet hits the streets! Time to check out its credentials

You just can't stop those Hewlett Packard boffins and marketing folk, they just keep on releasing DeskJet printers. With a big slice of the inkjet market already sewn up to their advantage, HP obviously want to keep it that way, and this latest model builds on the success of their previous DJ550C. So, what's the new machine like then?

Well, it still has the familiar square looking casing, and only its new badge tells you it's a different printer from any other DeskJet. But then why change for the sake of it, the DeskJet range of printers might be ugly ducklings, but they're solid, dependable workhorses, and this one comes with a confidence inspiring three year guarantee.

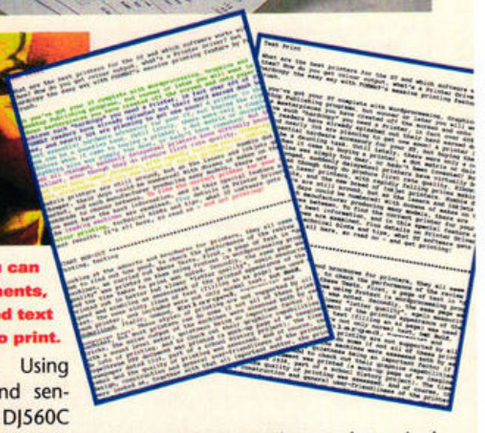


■ If you've been waiting for a new streamlined look for the DeskJet you'll be sadly disappointed, the DJ560C is still the same old square looking utilitarian device Deskjets have always been. But it works beautifully and that's what really matters.

Getting the printer up and running is no problem, just snap the two ink cartridges into place, and connect it to your ST's printer port via a standard parallel printer cable. Testing the printer with *Protext 6*, a word processor, (£152.75, Arnor, ☎ 0733 68909) the sixty line *STF* test page took 42 seconds to print out in draft quality (mono), and 48 seconds in letter quality. Using colour, with some words and sentences in different hues, the DJ560C took nearly three minutes to print the same page.

■ Yummy, these strawberries look good enough to eat!

■ Colour output from the latest Deskjet is the best yet, with results like these you can create brilliant posters and flyers.



■ With the new DJ560C you can create multi-coloured documents, but remember that coloured text takes much longer to print.

To try out the graphics reproduction we used *Imagecopy 2* (£19.95, FaST Club, ☎ 0602 455250) to print some colour pictures. This produced some stunning colour pictures in about two and a half to three minutes each for snapshot-sized photographic quality images.

Verdict

The new DJ560C is yet another winner from Hewlett Packard, and is the best colour inkjet you can get for this kind of money. Printed results are excellent, and the ink cartridges aren't that expensive to buy. And having the option to print in mono or colour can be very handy. The long guarantee and the fact that most ST software works really well with DeskJets means you can't go far wrong with this printer. Shop around and you might even be able to pick it up for less!

PETER CRUSH

Those technical details

FONTS: There are six built-in text fonts in a range of pitches, and some like CG Times print in proportional spacing. All fonts are printable in a small range of text height, and can be styled as expanded, underlined, subscript/superscript, bold and italic.

GENERAL: The printer responds to HP PCL level three commands, shared with other Deskjet models and the HP Laserjet 2, so it works with software supporting these (using its black cartridge). Any colour software with a DJ550C printer driver works in colour too.

MEDIA: Paper or transparency film within the weight range 16 to 135 gsm in US Letter, US Legal and A4 sizes can be handled, and a new envelope holder is built into the lower sheetfeeder tray. The printer has a built-in sheet feeder holding up to 100 sheets.

SIZE: The printer is 443mm wide, 206mm high by 389mm in depth, and it weighs in at 6.6 kg (just over fourteen pounds). The power supply unit is an external transformer which is supplied and comes complete with all leads and plugs.

WHO NEEDS COLOUR?

HP DeskJets first became popular as monochrome printers, using black ink in a combined print-head/ink cartridge. But now that colour printing is fast becoming the new standard, it's handy to have a machine that can work both in mono or colour. That's where the DJ560 comes in, because it has two print-heads built-in. They sit side by side in the mechanism, and if your document has colour in it, the colour print-head springs into life. It contains three colours in separate ink reservoirs, these being Yellow, Magenta and Cyan. Using just these three colours it's possible to dither and mix them on the page so that hundreds of shades of colour can be represented. Ordinary text or mono graphics in your document are simply automatically printed with the black cartridge, and most decent ST software has a suitable DeskJet colour printer driver to facilitate this. Colour printing is obviously particularly valuable if you use desktop publishing software or art programs. But even some word processors use colour now, like *Protext 6* (£152.72, Arnor, ☎ 0733 68909) or the forthcoming *Papyrus* (£129.95, Hisoft, ☎ 0525 718181).

DeskJet 560C colour printer

£440, Hewlett Packard
☎ 0344 369222

Highs
- Cheap price.
- Superb mono and colour output.

Lows
- Nothing to grumble about.

What else?
- DeskJet 310, £235, Hewlett Packard, ☎ 0344 369222.

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M17 .....Roland 050 Librarian
M8 .....Roland MT32 Editor
M754 ...Yamaha PSR400 Utilities
M72 ...Yamaha QY10 Loader
M50 .....Yamaha DX/TX Voices
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M757 ...Midi Drum Files

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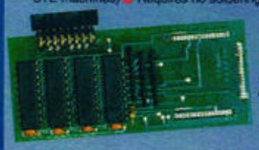

£49.95

N.B. Due to the large variance in design of the Atari ST, there is a small minority of boards in existence which may require a little soldering.

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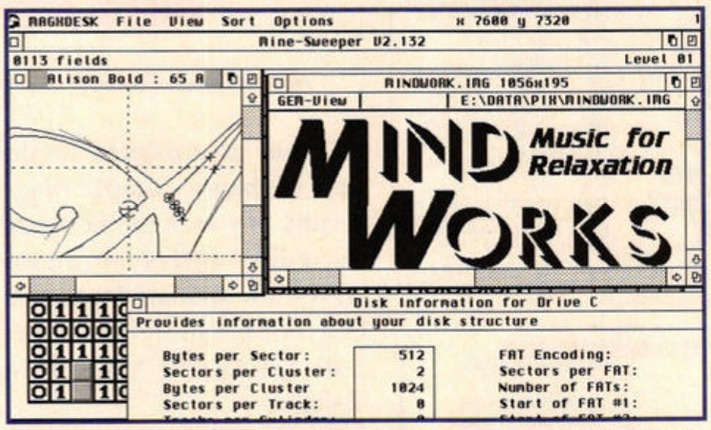
MAG!X

Is *Mag!X* the best multi-tasking operating system ever for the ST?

It completely overwrites TOS, it multi-tasks faster than anything previously seen on the ST and it doesn't cost an arm and a leg to buy. No, we're not dreaming again, *Mag!X* has arrived and brought with it a whole new dimension of possibilities for your ST. Unlike other multi-tasking systems, *Mag!X* is a total operating system replacement written 100% in machine code for optimum speed. The really good news is that it is still very good at being compatible with your favourite ST programs.

"*Mag!X* enables several programs to be resident in memory at once"



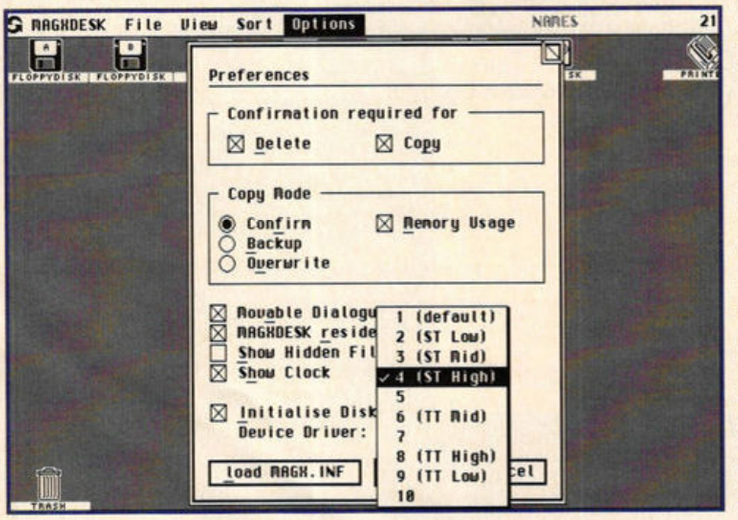
Here you see *Mag!X* doing what it does best... running loads of programs at once. On screen you can see *Fonty, Gem View, Diamond Edge* and *Minesweeper* running. What you can't see is STZIP in the background archiving 1.2MBytes of files. Impressed, you should be, because each of the other programs ran at virtually their normal speed when accessed.

So how does it work?

Mag!X installs itself via a booter program which you need to run in your Auto folder. It is installable to floppy if you don't have a hard drive but hard drive users, as ever, get the most out of the program. The installation program is a breeze to use as long as you have your serial number to hand. Once run, the booter program performs a reset on your ST, kicks out TOS and loads the *Mag!X* code. The rest of your Auto folder programs run as normal once *Mag!X* is installed. After a few moments the *Mag!X* Desktop pops up and you're ready for some seriously fast multi-tasking.

A note about Desktops...

Mag!X comes supplied with its own Desktop which has been developed for multi-tasking from the *Kaos* Desktop. You can, however, use any multi-tasking compatible Desktop such as *Neodesk 3* and shortly, *Neodesk 4*.



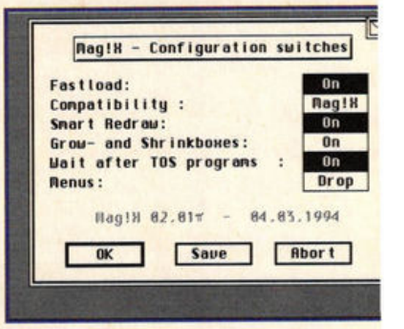
This section of the *Mag!X* Desktop enables you to customise the functions to suit yourself. There is a screen resolution switcher which includes TT resolutions as well as the three ST ones. You can also turn on the built-in corner clock from here, it saves running an external clock accessory or program.

Welcome to *Mag!X*. The fastest multi-tasking system on your ST that is able to run standard ST programs. *Mag!X* is a complete replacement for TOS in all its forms and it can, in single tasking mode on a standard ST, run programs significantly faster than TOS does. Combine this with smooth and stable multi-tasking and you have a package which could revolutionise the way in which you use your ST.

System Solutions are releasing *Ease* Desktop very soon which is the recommended *Mag!X* Desktop. It has a whole bunch of superb features, be sure to watch out for our review when it arrives.

So what is multi-tasking?

Multi-tasking, put simply, is a way of sharing processor time between two or more programs. *Mag!X* enables several programs to be resident in memory at once, even if they are not



Click on the configuration accessory which comes with *Mag!X* and you are presented with this range of options. The "Compatibility" setting can be toggled for TOS or *Mag!X*. Normally it is left on *Mag!X* but it can be switched in order to enable some "dirty" programs to run.

Hard Drive Software and Mag!X

The majority of hard drive software is completely compatible with *Mag!X* but there may be some of you who experience some problems. If your hard drive uses ICD or GE Soft software then you've got no reason to worry. If you use *Protar* software though, you might find you have a compatibility problem.

Thankfully, *Protar* have released a new version of their hard drive software that's especially compatible with *Mag!X*. If you have a version below 4.19 then you need to contact Analogic Computing, *Protar's* agents in the UK, for update information. (Analogic Computers ☎ 081 546 9575.) If you experience problems getting *Mag!X* to boot-up and you use some other hard drive software, System Solutions are happy to sell you a copy of HD Driver for just £20. This software is compatible with virtually all hard drives and adaptors.

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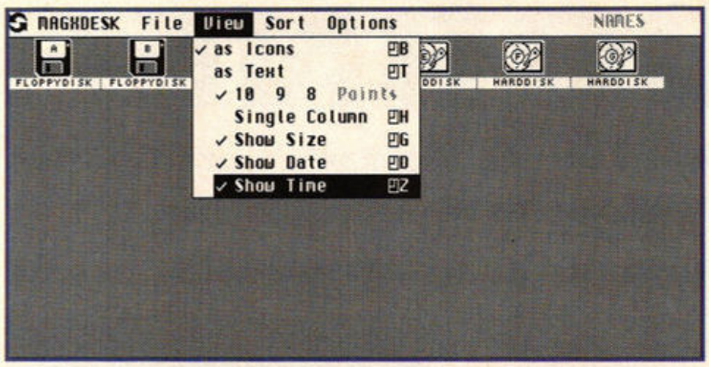
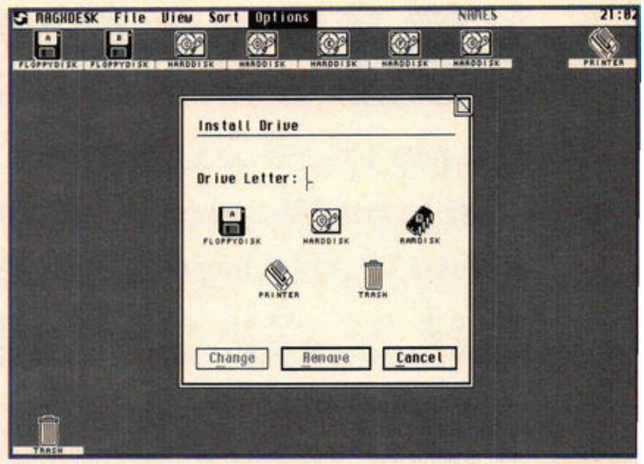
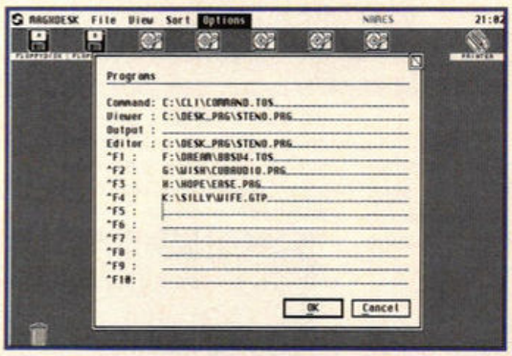


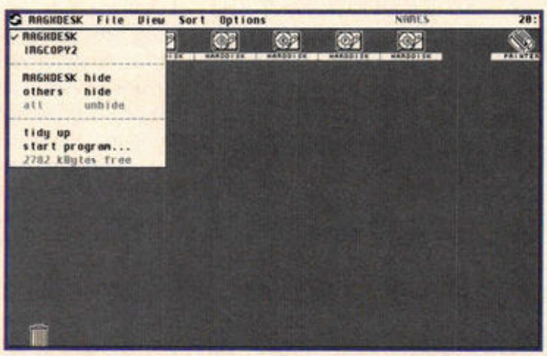
The view menu enables you to control the look of the windows in *Magxdesk*. The size of the window font is variable and files can even be displayed in multiple columns to save space. There is the usual choice between text and icon display.



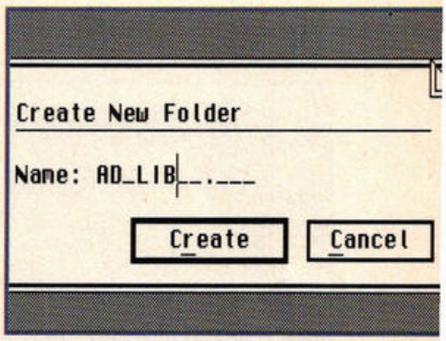
Five basic icons are provided for the the drives, trash can and printer. *Magxdesk* enables you to use a variety of icons for programs, files and folders but you have to configure them separately using the supplied program. It is possible to import icons from *Neodesk*, *Teradesk* or TOS 2.06 and use them in *Magxdesk*.



It's always handy to be able to set up macros in any program and *Magxdesk* does not disappoint us in this respect. You can define a text viewer, text editor and also a command line interface program. There are also ten slots using <CTRL> + <F?> for you to assign your choice of programs to. This sort of assignment helps to keep the Desktop uncluttered and makes programs very quick to launch.



This pull-down menu is available at the extreme left hand side of the GEM menu bar or wherever there is clear white space on the menu bar. It enables you to switch easily between applications and to "Hide" the current application without quitting from it. The "Tidy Up" function re-draws the screen to get rid of any "debris" left by previously run programs.



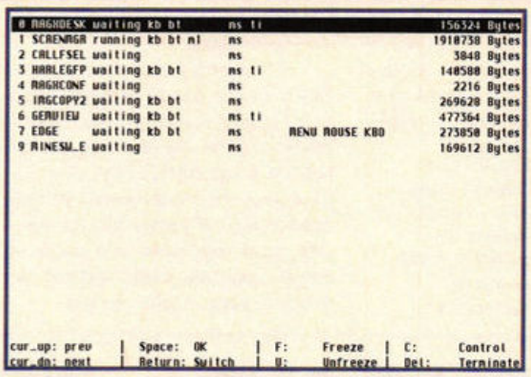
Would you believe it? As well as format and copy options, there is even a nifty facility for creating folders in *Magxdesk*. What will they think of next?

active. To load a program simply double-click on it and wait for its menu bar to appear. After you have loaded a few programs you can click the mouse button on an empty part of the menu bar to see the *Mag!X* pull-down menu. Here you see all the currently loaded programs and you can switch between them. It is also possible to hide the screen display of programs without actually quitting from them. If a program leaves some

"It completely overwrites TOS, it multi-tasks faster than anything seen on the ST"

of its screen display behind when you quit from it there is a handy "Tidy Up" function which restores the good looks of your screen display.

As well as task switching, *Mag!X* enables you to set away tasks in the background such as ray tracing or archiving and still use another program in the foreground. There is even a handy utility provided with the package which enables you to set the "Time Slicing" between different applications. This means that you can choose which programs get the bigger share of processor time. If you assign a tiny amount of processor time to a ray tracing application it could be many hours before it is finished but you can have the use of your ST while it works.



By pressing <ALT> + <CTRL> + <ESC> you can access this secret screen! The display clearly shows which programs are loaded and how much memory they are using. If you are having difficulty quitting from a program then it can be "Deleted" from memory here, once and for all. You are also able to freeze and unfreeze programs here, in order to free up processor time.

When you have finished you can then give all the time over to the raytracer to get the job finished. You can, by use of a weird key combination, interrupt any application at any time and enter the Manager screen.

Here you can see the exact memory usage of every application. If you need to free up memory you can delete programs or if you just need more processor time you can "Freeze" programs. All of these functions build into a well thought out and user friendly multi-tasking management system.

Verdict

Mag!X itself is really something special. It's written entirely in machine code and has taken a long time to develop. Its performance is impressive, to say the least. It is unfortunate that it comes packaged with *Magxdesk* because this Desktop really doesn't show the program off to its full potential. *Magxdesk* is competent and useable but it does tend to hold *Mag!X* up a little. When used with *Neodesk 3*, *Mag!X* appears to move up a gear or two.

With the imminent arrival of *Ease* Desktop *Mag!X* may yet have still more to offer us. It would appear that, for now, *Mag!X* is the fastest and most compatible multi-tasking system for your ST.

The program is being supported and developed so it's well worth registering a copy for future updates. Buy with confidence.

ANDY CURTIS

Mag!X

£69.95 from System Solutions ☎ 081 693 1919
All ST's and TT's 2MBytes or more.

Highs
- Blisteringly fast.
- Runs standard ST/TT programs.
- Very stable.

Lows
- Some hard drive software incompatibility.
- *Magxdesk* slow to open windows.
- Poor icon handling.

What else ?
- *Multitos* – Atari's first attempt at multi-tasking, starting to look out-dated. Hisoft/AVR ☎ 0525 718181)
- *Geneva* – already established as a competent multi-tasking system. Compo Software ☎ 0487 3582

94%

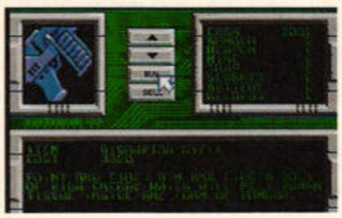
www.stformat.com

INDIES CORNER

If only there was a game that featured James Stewart, Gary Cooper and John Wayne, you could say let's play cowboys and indies." O-ho. Chris Lloyd saddles up and looks at the independents

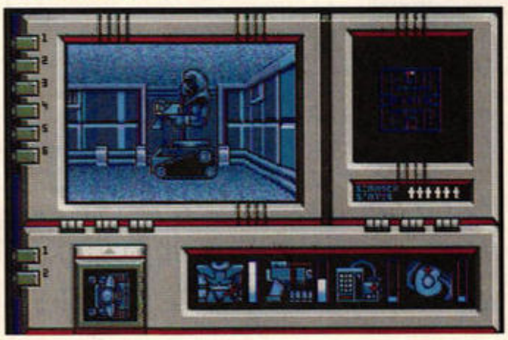
THE MARK OF CAIN

You're going to need a friend with an ST for this one. If you haven't, well, you're going to be a bit stuck. You see, *Mark of Cain* is a two-player game that uses two STs to play which you hook up using MIDI cables. The plot is thin, but hey, who needs plots anyway? You and your opponent control combat droids that move about a maze with the express purpose of filling each other full of lead.



■ Choosing your equipment before the bout, vital stuff. The mines are very nasty, they don't show up on the screen at all.

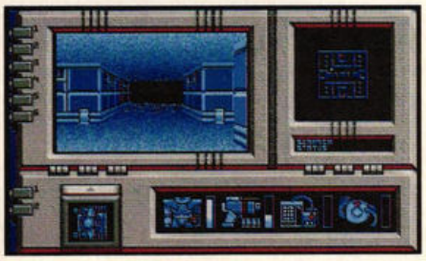
First you choose your weapons, armour and other handy gizmos like scanners and recharges. You have a limited amount of credits and there are lots of goodies to choose from. Do you go all out for fire-power or plump for the juicy armour? Decisions, decisions. Once tooled up it's time for the maze which has a *Dungeon Master* feel. You can move forwards, backwards and to the side as well as spin on the spot. Now comes the interesting part as you hunt down the enemy. There are sneaky booby-trap and proximity mines for the cunning and some meaty guns for those who like a more direct approach. The graphics have a strong blue theme to them and are well up to the job.



■ That's him, that's the bloke who spilt my shandy. Go on dad belt him, what you waiting for?

The game has been in development for two years and plays smoothly. It's written in *STOS*, but is a distinct cut above the usual products of the language. The exhilaration of trashing a real live opponent is superb. When you get familiar with the standard maze there is a maze editor for you to piece together your own battle zones.

A second version is planned which runs on one ST with the antagonists taking turns. If you haven't played a game like this and can get hold of a second ST, then you're in for a treat. It's not the fastest or most sophisticated of games but you get a jolly good rush when you sneak up behind your best friend and cut him to bits in a hail of laser rifle fire.



■ The stillness, the creeping menace. Will it be a homicidal combat droid around the next corner or just more corridor? Nice shade of blue though.

Mark of Cain

£5
Direct from: Alex Whittle, 7 Woodville Road, West Denton Hall, Newcastle NE15 7JZ

Highs
- A real life enemy.
- Different equipment adds variety.

Lows
- You could loose your friends quickly.
- Limited scope.

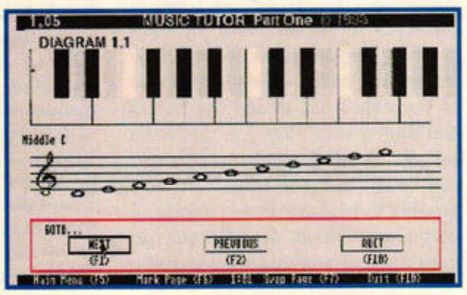
80%

MUSIC TUTOR – PART ONE

How many of us had piano lessons when we were children? Most of us, probably. And did we keep it up? Are we able to impress at parties? Probably not. We might have been though if we'd had the *Music Tutor* to help out. It promises to teach sight-reading and uses a simple series of exercises to do it.

First you need a MIDI keyboard hooked up to tinkle on. The program starts out with a very simple introduction to musical notation starting with the stave. It then works through the various notes, rests and signatures and ends up with chords. You are rewarded with a bell or a buzzer depending on whether you get an exercise right or wrong. It also saves your progress as you work through the 12 lessons.

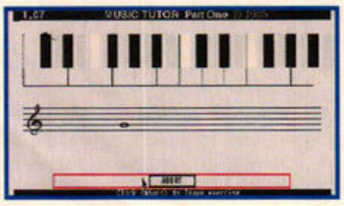
The approach can be a little mechanistic, but it does mean you can progress at your own pace. The main selling point is that you get instant feedback on your progress. It's a sort of computeach. As with all musical skill: practice and dedication is the key. *Music Tutor* doesn't work miracles, you still have to put the effort in, but it's interactive and a lot more fun than learning from a book.



■ Basic principles. Those lines across are called a stave and the squiggly thing is a clef. *Music Tutor* is aimed squarely at the absolute novice.

Keyboards are great fun once you get going. Sight-reading is a very useful skill and one that requires some hard work. If you get through this program you are well on your way to being able to work your way through a sheet of music. Progress from chopsticks and with practise you could be the next Mozart.

■ Now this is easy, just one note to play, opps. No, hang on, it's one of these keys here. Why don't they label them, or something?



■ Music Tutor Part One, an interactive educational attempt to make sight-reading music easy to learn. Does a pretty good job of it.

Music Tutor

Part One
£10
Direct from: Andee Graves, 81A Cambridge Road, Girton, Cambridge CB3 0PN

Highs
- Simple modular approach.
- Very clear instructions.

Lows
- A bit too simple at times.
- Stops when it starts to get interesting.

71%

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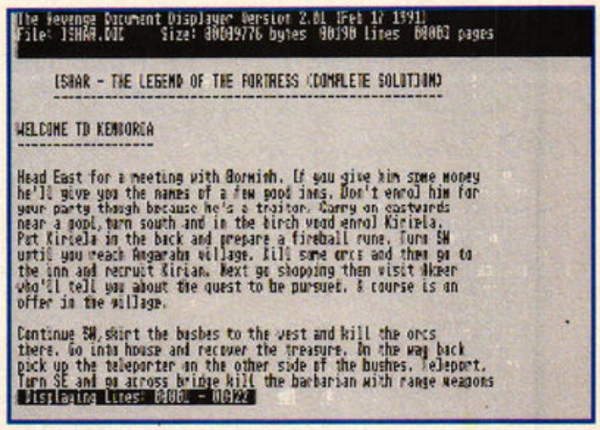
THE ULTIMATE CHEATERS GUIDE DATABASE

Cheating is of course despicable. True for the majority of life's endeavours but occasionally necessary to save your sanity. Sometimes you find yourself struggling with a game and you have no choice. You have to cheat otherwise you'll end up tearing you hair out. Make sure that you really can't get any further, life isn't meant to be easy and neither is games playing. The solutions to adventures can help you out in a tight spot and let you carry on with the rest of the game, providing you stop reading the solution that is. One of the joys of a good game is the challenge. You should only really cheat as an absolute last resort.

The Ultimate Cheaters Guide Database is the result of four months typing and has over 600 cheats and solutions to ST and Lynx games. There are old and new games here. The short cheats are held in a database program while the longer ones are text files. The excellent Revenge Document Reader is supplied to read these.

Cheats come in all varieties from simple level codes for *Populous* and *Lemmings* to pokes that give infinite lives or invulnerability for the arcade games. There are other collections of game cheats about and a few are in the Public Domain but there aren't many as comprehensive as this. Go on if you're desperate and can't find what you want in the pages of Gamebusters.



The full solution to that epic struggle between good and evil, *Ishar*, in text form.

***The Ultimate Cheater Guide* is bang up to date with cheats to games like *Zool*. What's the cheat? Ah, now that would be telling.**

Cheaters Guide Database

£4.95

Direct from: Ijaz Hussain, Well Croft Hope House, 165 Ash Road, Saltley, Birmingham BS 1DR

Highs

- Lots and lots of cheats collected together.

Low

- Cheating can spoil your enjoyment of some games, use with caution.

62%

PREMIER LEAGUE MANAGER

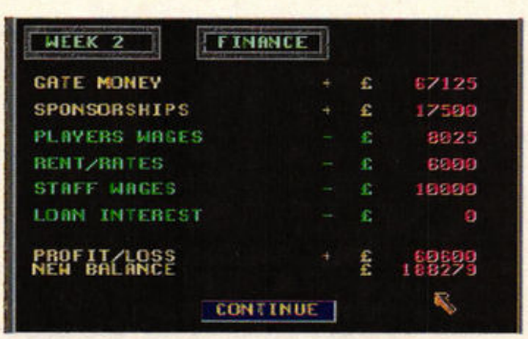
Some styles of game just won't lie down and die, football management sims seem to be the most durable. *Premier League Manager* is a simple no-frills game where you don your obligatory sheepskin coat and trainers and manage a team of likely lads. It follows the classic mould. Between matches you train you squad, buy and sell players and decide on the lucky eleven for the next match. You then get to sit and watch the results come in. The idea is to keep solvent and win a cup or two.

The game is written in *STOS* and, by the look of it, by a minimalist. It's all text. There are a few samples to brighten it up but not one picture of a perm or a second-hand roller in sight. Each player has a skill level which can be increased by training – they seem to be able to play in any position on the pitch which is handy but not realistic. Your other options are pretty limited. You can take out a loan to buy a flash player and bump up the results and the gate money. You can also hire a physio or a talent scout, and that's about it.

If you are an aficionado of the genre you'll probably dismiss *Premier League Manager* as far too simple. If you've never played one and want a gentle introduction then it's absorbing enough. It's certainly impossible to tackle the complexities of football management. It is the sort of game that has a curious appeal once you get involved. It's so unremittingly plain-looking though.

The match in progress - you get the odd bit of text and sample to tell you what's going on and that's about it.

Calm down it's only the main menu of *Premier League Manager*. Everything is mouse controlled and a bit too simple.



The finances of your chosen team. Apparently a physio get five grand a week. We'll dab the baby oil on and slap anyone about for that sort of cash.

Premier League Manager

£3

Direct from: Andrew Ferguson, 6 West Royd Ave, Windhill, Shipley, West Yorkshire BD18 2PB

Highs

- Strangely absorbing after a while.

Lows

- Barren looks.
- Ultimately just too simple.

45%

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SCREENPLAY

Hellloooooo, babeeee! *Leisure Suit Larry* meets *Ishar 3* in the Screenplay bar. The result: beautiful music or is *Ishar* not that kind of girl?

PREVIEWS

Robinson's Requiem (ST)
Prisoner Cell Block H or *Alien 3?* Prison adventures in 3D with Simarils latest epic. Page 57

Premier Manager 3 (ST)
Yet more footie managing – can you cope? Page 56

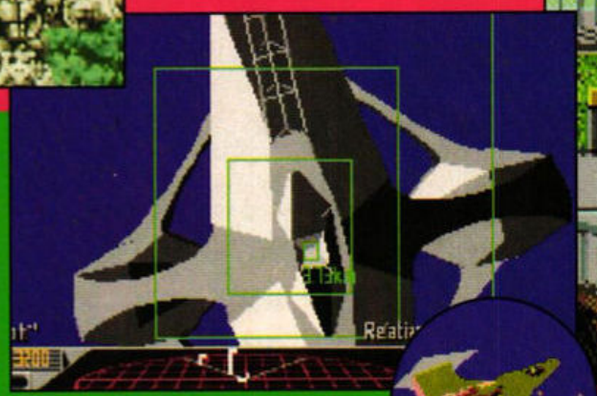
Ishar 3 (ST)
Can the latest installment keep the *Ishar* legend alive? Page 56

Double Dragon IV (Jaguar)
The Jag gives this famous fighter a kick up the '90s Page 56

TACTICAL MANAGER
Now what kind of manager would a non-tactical manager be? Anyone who said Graham Taylor should read the review now!

CADAVER
You say *Cadaver*, we say *Cadaver*. Regardless of pronunciation the Bitmap's brave dwarf in back - budget style - Page 64.

HELP!
The best playing tips this side of Swansea on games like: *The Secret Of Monkey Island, Lure Of The Temptress, Ishar 2* and Rick *Dangerous* – courtesy of the good Captain. Page 66



FRONTIER: ELITE 2
Top tips on just how to find folk, follow them and then scatter their remains across the void of space. Hurrah!

LEISURE SUIT LARRY 3
Can computing's favourite womaniser finally get a date? It's up to you to help Lazza get (snip). See page 62

This month	Last Month	Game	Publisher	Price	*STF* Rating
1	1	Cannon Fodder	Virgin	£29.99	93%
2	2	Frontier: Elite 2	Gametek	£29.99	91%
3	5	Championship Manager 93	Domark	£29.99	80%
4	6	The Greatest	Beau Jolly	£32.99	91%
5	3	The Lotus Trilogy	Gremlin Graphics	£29.99	91%
6	4	Manchester United Europe	Buzz	£9.99	NR
7	?	Sensible Soccer 92/93	Renegade/Mindscape	£25.99	91%
8	?	Championship Manager 94 Data Disk	Domark	£9.99	NR
9	?	Powermonger/WW1 Data Disk	Hit Squad	£14.99	NR
10	?	Striker	GBH	£25.99	79%

NE = New Entry RE = Re-entry NR = Not reviewed

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ISHAR 3

PREVIEW

PUBLISHER: DAZE
PRICE: £33
EXPECTED: JULY

Trilogies are a legitimate art form. "They encompass the classical structure of beginning, middle and end," beams eminent historian of literature Ernest Thews, "and are not, for example, designed to rake in three times the money." And here comes another one now, except it's a game. In a not altogether unnoticeable parallel with the same programmers' *Robinson's Requiem*, *Ishar 3* has been in the works for about 50 years. It still isn't finished, but looks quite lovely. Let's face it, it's going to take a disaster of flash flood proportions to mess up this series of games. Which isn't to say it might not happen, of course. (Balance.)

That man would never really be walking around a forest in a full suit of armour. It's so cumbersome. He'd spend more time running into trees and stumbling over roots. Buffoon.

The plot outline we've been given sounds suitably convoluted and odd. Shandar, the villain of *Ishar 2*, has possessed the last of the dragons and taken the name Wohratax, which simply begs to be delivered by Kenneth Williams in a scene with Jim Dale. In his new guise, the scoundrel is travelling in time to interfere with the evolution of the world in his favour, thus seizing power and all that sort of thing. So you have to follow him through history, dealing with previously-extinct monsters and characters on the way.

The *Dungeon Master* perspective of the previous games is back again, but greatly improved with all manner of attractively *Robinson's*-like rendering effects. Night follows day in a predictable but nevertheless charmingly depicted fashion, and everything. You've a greater choice of characters too, with all sorts of individual traits to make you feel really ashamed when you name them all Basil and let them die senselessly in a pointless fight. Alternatively, you can use your hardy survivors from the previous *Ishar* games. There are enhanced STE and Falcon versions as well, which can only be a good thing. The game should be released in time for a review in next month's issue, but don't bet any large amounts of money on it.

JONATHAN NASH

PREMIER MANAGER 2

PREVIEW

PUBLISHER: GREMLIN
PRICE: £26
EXPECTED: NOW

Footie management games. It's blazingly clear everybody in the universe loves them without question, because they're always all over the charts. Even the ones that aren't any fun to play at all, because, after all, statistics are the important things. Aren't they? Aren't they? You pedantic fools.

And after that brief tirade, a reassuringly mellow preview of this Gremlin sequel. The first game, as you recall, was a hit of unimpeachable quality. Why, *STF* itself was moved to award it 85% in issue 43. Fun, that's what *Premier Manager* was. The sequel as well, we hope. For, as we discussed last month, only severe playtesting can unsew the secrets of a footie sim. And, as also discussed, that would entail a review and not a preview, which once more lets us off the hook rather neatly. So here's an attention-grasping but uncritical list of features instead.

Sponsors, who buy advertising hoardings around the pitch.

Oh joy, a screen of text. No, we're really happy to see it. No, really. Yes.

European games. Playing styles, and playing formations. Haggling over wages and contracts. Three substitutes, including the goalkeeper. Training camps. Mid-season managerial opportunities, whatever they are. And all the usual stuff, including morale and fitness, weather and a grasping bank manager. Let us now wait for the finished game which, from the comments of players of other versions, is *Premier Manager*, but better, and with a two on the end.

JONATHAN NASH

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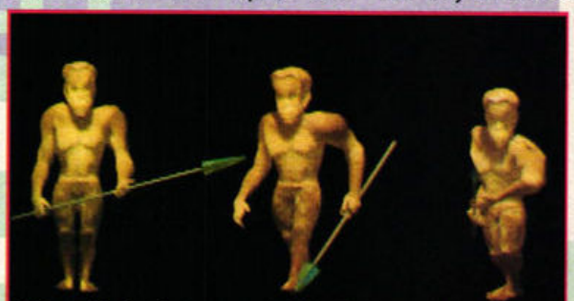
ROBINSON'S REQUIEM

PREVIEW

PUBLISHER: DAZE
PRICE: £26
EXPECTED: NOW

Tellingly, the notes on this game have been altered. The handwritten release date, which once read "February, 1993," then "March," then "April," has now been abandoned altogether. *Robinson's Requiem*, it seems, has been on the verge of release for about a million years. And once again, it wasn't quite ready for this month's issue. Still. Gives us an opportunity to tell you of the game, rather than springing a surprise review on you, eh? Hurdy ho.



Now this is a far more sensible outfit in which to run around a forest. Practical, fashionable; it's all the rage.

Your life in your hands

It sounds ghastly, but not in the Terry-Thomas sense. As a prisoner on an alien planet – the whole planet being the prison – you can fall foul not only of monsters, but of disease. Silmarils (the programmers) claim the game features an accurate representation of the dear old human body and all its quirks and twitches, so you can see precisely how badly you're doing. The landscape itself is supposedly fairly accurate as well, with words like "texture mapped" and "ray-traced" thrown around with no regard for personal safety.

This obviously makes a change from playing the part of a cartoony sprite in a platformish world, but we can't help feeling that Silmarils' descriptions of the horrors that can befall you, their symptoms and the debilitating effects they have on poor old Robinson are a bit too lovingly detailed. Where's the fun in watching somebody die by inches in front of your eyes? But then perhaps that's just our peevishly squeamish nature.

I am not a 3D algorithm, I am a free man

Your only aim is to escape. At least, that's the only aim Daze let us in on. Knowing Silmarils, there's likely to be a lot more to it than that. Mmmm.

Anyway, being a prison planet, everything on it that's not native is a prisoner, and you know what they're like. They're like you, for a start. Fortuitously you needn't shy away from them – a quick bit of 3D scrapping should see them off. And if you're injured in the process, well, you can always sew up a wound or, er, amputate a limb. We're getting squeamish again.

Rather than being able to roam the planet at will, the game limits you to a few square miles of incident-packed jungle. It's probably all for the best, as our unsettled imagination immediately started conjuring distressing pictures of one-legged men hopping from pole to pole while omnipotent players chuckled with glee at their decreasing red blood cell count.

Most of the action takes place within the main set – a large valley and the inmate community nestling within (a sort of prisoner village – a vaguely clever bit of wordplay fans). Here be monsters which you can knock about a bit and then skin for clothing, and natives with whom you can trade, and vicious armed robotic guards. There is, rather naturally, an active volcano thrown in for the obligatory spectacular ending.

Next month should see the finished game arrive. It should. Really. Unless it's all a fantastic plot, and Silmarils are cackling over sophisticated displays revealing our manipulatedly fluctuating level of disappointment, of course.

JONATHAN NASH

And it's all gone wrong for the boy from Syracuse. He's had to amputate his left leg, the help panel's in French, and he's picnicking in a fallout area.

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DOUBLE DRAGON 4

First, there was a dragon. Then there was a double one, and now there are four more of that one. Mmm

If only we were shareholders in the company that hires out the caves, warehouses and temples used in all these fights. We'd make pots of cash.

JAGUAR PREVIEW

PUBLISHER: TELEGAMES
PRICE: £45
EXPECTED: AUTUMN

Took us by surprise, this one. The original list of Jaguar games under development claimed it was *Double Dragon 5*, which confused us mightily, as nobody could recall there being a *Double Dragon 4*. But, of course, it was all a typographical error due to an internal misunderstanding, and number four it was all along. And here it is now. Sort of.

Pointy things that hurt

It's a beat-'em-up, obviously. Now, we've nothing against beat-'em-ups in principle, in the same way we've nothing against any other type of game. It's the huge number of practically identical *Street Fighter 2* clones that sparks our ire. We've always taken the view that if it doesn't beat *SF2*, what's the point? It may seem harsh, but you can't afford to show weakness in this dangerous and mercenary age.

Anyway. *Double Dragon 4*. Fortunately, it differs from *SF2* in that you have weapons. Nasty big weapons like swords and sticks. So that's all right then. As with *Club Drive*, it's at a very early stage of development, but there's enough there to get an idea of what's going on. And what's going on looks to be a mite tasty. From the opening screen where the fighters' faces zoom into place, to the marvellously overcomplicated background selection menu where you guide an icon around a map of the town, *Double Dragon 4* blazes with scrupulously-buffed shininess. You even get a completely pointless dossier on each character to memorise and treasure for always.

Well, well. Phwoar, eh lads? And not, for example, this sort of thing shouldn't have outlived 1986. Or, we really need more women in this industry.

You could almost imagine these characters moving unconvincingly in an insultingly poor cartoon and trying to sell you things.

One-on-one too

The *Double Dragon* series, old people may recall, was never a one-on-one affair. Instead you and another player advanced through levels, hitting people until they fell over and then kicking them until they cried uncle. In all three games, this was because you were trying to rescue a woman who had been kidnapped. Oh dear. (Actually, in *Dub Drag 2* she was killed, but that didn't stop her from being whisked away again in number three. Odd, really.) Defeated villains would often leave behind knives and sticks and things, and you could pick them up and use them for the forces of good, by hitting people with them until they fell over.

Very good fun all round, in fact, so you get the option to do exactly the same thing in *Double Dragon 4*. Basically, instead of a *SF2* clone, it's a *Double Dragon* game, but with the addition of one those "versus modes" you hear so much about these days and curse for the dreadful name.

The version we were treated to seeing has barely advanced beyond the stage of polishing the graphics. The play mechanics are still to be thrashed out, so whether the game features those notorious special moves is yet to be seen. However, the cast seems a meaty bunch, with such predictably disparate characters as a Harryhausen-like skeleton, and not one but two (two! Two!) token women. Yes. We wait with some excitement.

JONATHAN NASH

And there's Peter Ustinov being hit over the head with Helen Hayes' umbrella in the far corner.

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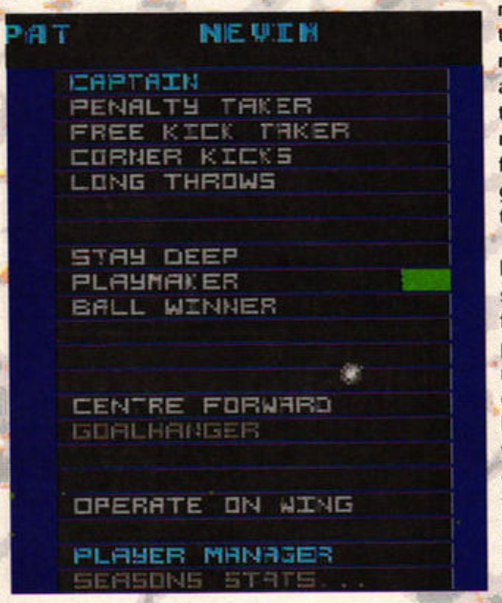
TACTICAL

We thought it was *Football Tactician 2*, but now Kompart have changed the goalposts

In order to fully understand the appeal of football management games, you must try and understand football itself. To the uninitiated, the footballing ritual of wearing colours, singing, chanting and jumping up and down a bit in a gesticulative fashion may seem primitive and tribal – shamanistic even. For the rest of us, we know that the attraction of football lies in the spectacle, the drama, the competition, the tension, the sense of bonding with your fellow man and, most of all, the ubiquitous greasy pie and Bovril at half-time. All these things, and more, are responsible for the passion that elevates the game beyond the ken of non-footballing outsiders.

For some, one game every Saturday, and the occasional game during the week, is nowhere near satisfying or fulfilling enough. They need to be satiated, to fill every waking moment thinking about and testing their footballing theories. And that's where football management games gain a promotion place.

With their peculiar brand of statistical simulation and rigid formula, some sad people claim that management games contain enough calculations and shifting of variables to be considered "realistic." But, to borrow (and ever-so-slightly modify) a phrase from a fellow journo "if we wanted realism in our football games, we'd go down to the park and play with a sodding football."



Each player can be assigned a task in the game. Here, we're making full use of Pat Nevin.

When you kick off, initially, your low rating only enables you to manage 1st Division clubs.

Rearrange your team to suit the strategy and tactics of the opposition.

Football management games should, above all other gaming considerations and principles, be entertaining and fun to play. Otherwise, as has happened with so many management games in the past, you run the risk of alienating and forcing the gamer into the realm of tedious menu clicking and excessive number chasing.

This is the very place that *Tactical Manager*, from Kompart, takes you if you buy it. One of the fundamental motivational reasons for playing and interacting with a game, any game, is to achieve a state where you are rewarded. Rewarded for good play, judgement, skill, whatever; the reward taking the shape of points scored, bonuses awarded, animations accessed, and so on. Reward is the crux of "interactivity" – in a gaming sense at least – and the reason why you feel involved with a game in the first place. Take away the sense of reward and you immediately lose the interest of the gamer.

Bearing that in mind, with *Tactical Manager*, you can't help but conclude that the game has been deliberately designed to be boring, unfriendly and mostly meaningless. It's absolutely packed with numbers and statistics. So much so, in fact, that the hoard of extra memory consuming statistical information seems to have been implemented at the expense of the type of graphics that we've grown to expect from the ST.

Check the boxout on the next page and see for yourself the full rogues gallery of graphic embellishments used to display the highlights of games in play. We're sure you would agree that, sparse, static soporific and somnific, sums them up nicely. Even the Amiga version of *Football Tactician 2* has better looking match highlight graphics; which isn't really saying much, because they're crap as well. So, Kompart could do us all a favour by answering this, why do the graphics have to be so feeble and sparse?

Does this pic make you think you're in for a treat? Thought so.

MANAGER

There's no excuse, other than slackness and disinterest, as far as we can make out.

Even the original *Football Manager* on the Spectrum had an animated sequence which, in the Spectrum's quaint inimitable fashion, helped create a feeling of tension and generated a sense of mild excitement whenever it appeared. You could never be quite sure whether your team were going to win or not.

Meanwhile, rosey sweet 8-bit nostalgia aside, why is that the 16-bit ST, featuring over 20 times the memory of a Spectrum, can only manage the flashing up of crudely drawn graphics enclosed in a small square in the way of highlights.

Before we are accused of being unfair, we must admit that this thrilling spectacle is somewhat enhanced by the addition of a small crudely drawn top-down view of a football field. The field plays host to an animated red rectangle frame which moves erratically up and down the pitch from goal-mouth to goal-mouth. In addition, each penalty area displays a fluctuating series of three digits. These digits are the combined ratings of each opposing team. It's almost too much excitement for a mortal frame to bare, we think.

Before we get carried away on a wave of sarcasm though, we'll take a look at some of the more positive aspects of the program before finally highlighting what is probably the most heinous footballing management crime ever.

Human League

Firstly, the amount of raw data is staggering. There are numbers for approximately every aspect of football you've ever thought about thinking about. And then there are more figures for the things you hadn't thought about. So much so, that merely listing them would fill more than the space set aside for this review. Therefore, we shall concern ourselves with some of the more relevant figures – the ones you deal with most – player statistics.

Each player has 20 statistics beside their name. Four of these are purely informational; age, number of goals scored, caps for national squad game and one other. The others are relevant to the role that the player fulfils in the team for example a defender has a high number for his "tackling" attribute. Juggling around with players and different formations enables you to change strategies and tactics each week depending on the strengths and weaknesses of the opposition. There are eight different strategies and tactics. These vary from normal strategy to playing a sweeper system and from normal tactics to out and out time wasting.

The one aspect of *Tactical Manager* that works really well is the ability to change tactics according to the state of play in a match. Say, for example, you found yourself one goal up with 15 minutes to go. By clicking on your logo you could change the tactics to time wasting or rough play. You could also reinforce your defence and opt to play for offside. The scope is almost limitless. There's no doubting that the actual game mechanics work well. Some tactical and strategic changes can be seen working almost as soon as you've given the orders. But even this clever statistical tomfoolery isn't enough to save the game from the niche market of fanatics, obsessives and sad loners that it's ultimately aimed at.

A tacti-view of the formation that your team adopts during the game. players or feel like a change, check out who's available.

Own goal

And here's why. There's far too much "dead time" – time that you're forced to be idle while you watch the computer code strut its stuff displaying the results of other games. The quickest we were able to get a match started, after having selected "Kick Off" was 50 seconds, the longest time was just under two minutes. During this time, you're forced to sit through a sequence of mostly inconsequential results. It's just too much to take. It would try the patience of a Saint (or a Greavsie). Why couldn't they have let the user interrupt and click through the results with the mouse, or store them in a cache that's accessible from one of the pull-down menus, or something, anything other than having to watch a load of meaningless figures flash in your face every two seconds; there's enough of them as it is in this game thank you.

Final score

All that really has to be said is that this program is not for the casual gamer seeking some light entertainment. This program's for dyed in the wool football fanatics, accountants and statisticians everywhere. If you belong to this list, buy *Tactical Manager* now, you'll love it. For all other football fans and gamers, the message is clear, avoid at all costs, this game could damage your mental health.

STEVE MCGILL

You've been beaten yet again. Time to check out who's on the transfer list.

MATCH HIGHLIGHTS?

Would you call a goal kick a match highlight? Neither would we. Yet it is the most common highlight of any game.

The rectangle is the flow of the play and the numbers are your team strength.

There are a few yellow cards around, but no red appear. Why?

No, not three goals scored, but one. This bit's even animated. Hurrah.

Tactical Manager
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Highs
- It's in depth.

Lows
- It's in depth.

54%

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LEISURE SUIT LARRY 3

Wouldn't you just know it! Sharp dressed man that you are, you parachute into a gorgeous and apparently deserted tropical paradise, looking dashing in your "leisure suit," with a head full of adventure and exploration. What happens next? The first beads of capitalism are sown in the natives' heads. They form Native Inc™ and start erecting time-share apartments. Hngff!

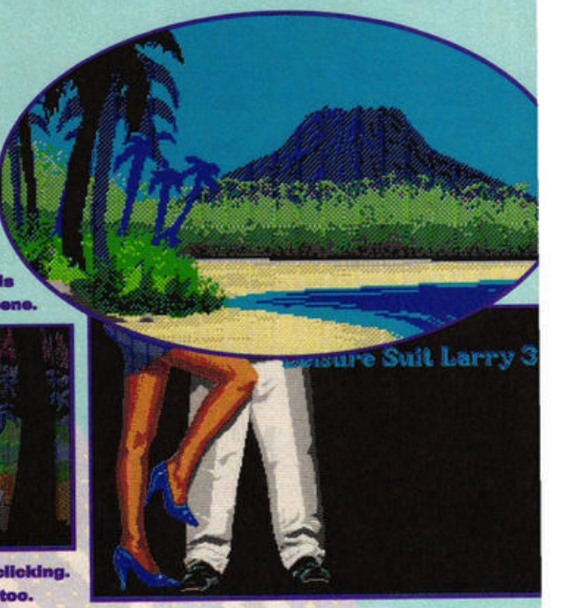
Such is the plot of the adult-orientated adventure facing one Larry Laffer – the star of the game that boasts Hawaiian shirts and special pants.

This is the game that claims to be widely offensive. What a novel marketing strategy! If you are offended by ethnic humour, pixellated nudity or adult situations, you're advised by the game developers not to play *Leisure Suit Larry 3*. Not only are you advised not to play it, but you also have to straddle the hurdle of the quiz – see American age of consent box. Responsible game producers? Or perhaps it's just the sort of empty promise 0898 number titillation that is supposed to attract *Loaded*-reading, post-nineties men in their droves. Hmn.

True, there are hugely pixellated semi-naked encounters and the odd bawdy text screen that hints at the natives' naivety and the Great White Explorer's superiority. But unless you're particularly adept at these games, it's you – the game player – the Great White Explorer in a silly suit that runs yourself ragged in the desperate pursuit of adult humour while the natives rake in the cash from the Great White Tourists.

This is click 'n' point territory. Push the cursor across the screen and yawn as Larry dawdles (you can alter the speed, but only at a cost to the background graphics) about the jumpy screens. The character bumbles around suffering animation and crab-walking, bumping into invisible obstacles in that endearing way that only games with utterly dreadful collision detection can. Finish one screen of luscious, pixellated jungle paradise and exit to the right, wait for the traditional "C'mon, c'mon, c'mon. Oh bluddy 'ell!" few seconds to access the next screen then tut as you enter the next screen of luscious, pixellated jungle from the right! "Oh! bluddy 'ell!" Again.

Here's Leisure Suit Larry preparing to greet his lovely lady wife Kalalau on their time-share balcony.



The indigenous tribe get wise and build time-share apartments in this beautiful scene.

It's not all point 'n' clicking. There's watching TV, too.

If you get lost, a handy, pointy pink hand points the way. Pinkly.

This is what it's all about. Larry's special pants, and Kalalau's arm, well, let's stop there.

Any thoughts of polishing the game go out of the window in the quest for ineffectual, grubby "adult" humour and the option to change the swear words that flash up in dialog boxes when a disaster befalls Larry to your favourite expletive of the moment. If you're buying a £1.50 fanzine, unintentional crappiness can be a virtue, but if you're after a lasting, playable adventure game for your ST, it's the kind of crappiness that makes you want to grit your teeth and growl.

There are no puzzles, as such, but it's certainly a little puzzling working out how to make use of some of the props – telescopes, televisions and even doors – that would seem on the face of it to be intuitive – but there are no really complicated items like cars because the islanders, who keep financial control of the island, forbid roads. Dead handy.

It's frustrating when potentially simple games become hard for the wrong reasons, and this is one. Or perhaps this is just a well-worked ploy to get your blood pressure up in preparation for when you get to the pixellated semi-naked bits.

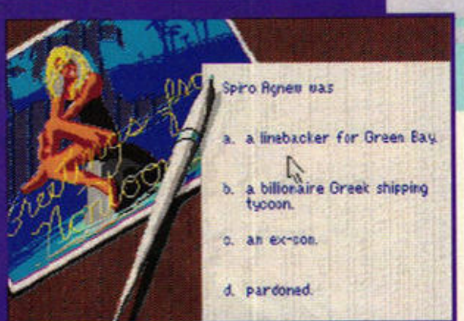
Verdict

On the whole the idea of sacrificing gameplay, strategy and quality of sound and graphics to make the game big and full of promise and innuendo falls a bit flat. Yes, there are auto and manual game saves so you can play a long game during your lunch breaks (or take advantage of the boss key which flashes up a spreadsheet, so you can sneak a game during office hours) but although *LSL3* is big, it's not varied enough and the tropical paradise becomes dull and cloudy with scattered showers by the weekend.

JOSSE BILSON

American age of consent

So, *Leisure Suit Larry 3* is an adult game. You can't play it unless you're over 18. Or until you answer enough of the unfathomably hard questions correctly. Well, they're not unfathomably hard, but as it's an American game, most of the questions lean heavily towards society on t'other side of the pond. Get enough of the questions right and you access play at the "Really Filthy" level. Get two out of five correct and you play "Rather Risqué" level. There is no discernable difference in the gameplay between these two levels. Tsk!



Your answers to these highly amusing all-American questions prove your age. Maybe.

Leisure Suit Larry

£12.99 Kixx XL
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Highs
- Big game that should keep you going.
- Maintains an air of expectation.
- Some of the humour.

Lows
- Dodgy, jerky animation.
- Slow, jumpy screen update.
- Doesn't live up to its adult hype.

64%

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ST FORMAT JULY 94

CADAVER

INCLUDING THE PAYOFF

It's a body. And *The Payoff* is probably the punchline to a complicated joke. We expect

A monstrously large game could soon come crashing, searching and puzzling its way to your ST. That's if you can afford the budget payoff and can resist the almost obligatory "Hey barman, Cadaver rum an' Coke!" jokes. They're simply not tolerated.

Cadaver is an RPG game, and a huge one at that. And, in the natural order of things, it's just got bigger – thanks to the add-on disk which increases the game size by about 50%. It's good to see games of this genre being extended, rather than a sequel being released. Sequels often tend to be re-hashes or rip-offs, but this is an extension in the same vein.

What's *Cadaver* all about, then? Well, it's a slightly dated looking RPG with a mystical air as you begin in dungeons and caverns, an air that gains more than a whiff of Mid-Europe as you progress through the levels to the rather Germanic Castle Wulf and on to the villages and inns.

As Karadoc the dwarf, joystick firmly in your hand, you explore hundreds (literally) of rooms and scenes on your quest to find the necromancer Dianos. Your objective is to kill Dianos, quite why, I'm not sure. There's nothing wrong with a spot of necromancy, especially at the weekend – as long as you're not bothering anyone who's resting. As with almost any other RPG, the eventual objective – usually, and as in this case, connected to sorcery, bounty hunters or both – tends to get lost amid a colossus of puzzles, sub-games and similar bothersome distractions. Needless to say any items, money and good times you find on your way are yours to keep.

Approach each object and put it in your rucksack. You never know when you might need it.

The game looks jolly smart with well-rendered graphics and moody dark passageways echoed by the black unused parts of the screen. Play this game alone in a darkened room for full effect. It's thoroughly engrossing. Karadoc and his stilted animation do rather detract from the moody atmosphere and the relentless isometric 3D view, while being the best way to look at the puzzle rooms also gets a little tiresome.

One of the early puzzles. You enter a room. It's a dead end, and you're way out is trapped by a deadly spider.

Cadaver is standard RPG fare. Find a lever, pull it, and progress.

The gameplay is the standard arcade-derived RPG adventure fare. Approach objects, collect them and apply them to the game environment in whatever way you see fit to aid your progression towards Dianos. Pick up keys, potions, pickaxes, swords and the like, insert them into your rucksack (which can hold a staggering 32 items, some of them very big, too) and forget about them until you reach the next puzzle. Then access your rucksack (which remains invisible) to cast spells, switch switches, freeze screens and read books – only items with a specific purpose are displayed and items, such as keys, that can only be used once miraculously disappear. Why you can't just open and close rucksacks remains a mystery. Yep, standard RPG adventure fare.

Other functions include an overall map (very useful) and a diary which relates to your personal status, so don't stand in the green goo for too long or you'll hear one of the smashing sound effects that means you've bought the farm, and don't hang around for four days without pausing or saving the game because Karadoc, dwarven though he may be, needs an occasional nosh up too. The save game facility has its own twist, too. Regardless on what level you've reached you must pay in gold to save. The further into the game you are, the more it costs. An ingenious way to keep you playing, but infuriating if you've reached the bar, having frivolously flittered away your last dosh on some new boots and have a bus to catch. Hmn.

So the boat is damaged. In the good tradition of RPGs, the hero must fix it and use it.

Verdict

Overall, this is smashing. Highly playable, good looking, strategic, smart sounds and huge. Other than being a little dated and samey and the animation getting annoying, we heartily recommend this.

JOSSE BILSON

THE PAYOFF

The extra disk in this budget pack is an add-on extra called *The Payoff*. It extends the game by about half as much again, that's four levels, and around 200 rooms. Once you've completed the original mission by disposing of Dianos, *The Payoff* is your adventures on your return to the village of Wulfheim. It follows on from the original plot, and is very much in the same gameplay vein, though we suspect the graphics to have been tweaked.

The Payoff is to *Cadaver* as a skirts and spoilers kit is to a Ford Capri. The original package isn't everybody's cup of tea, but if you're the type who'd pay money on a Capri, you might as well go the whole hog and have the spoilers for free. Sort of.

Bearded dwarf found in decaying skin sample biology shock horror.

Cadaver

£15 Kixx XL
☎ 021 625 3388

Highs
- The sheer size of it.
- Clear graphics.
- Good sound effects.

Lows
- Repetitious, and *The Payoff* is just more of the same.
- No game music option.

87%

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GAMEB

Can't be bothered playing your games? We'll do it for you, then. Tch

THE CHAOS ENGINE: RENEGADE

Back in STF55, Silas Morgan reckoned he'd found the ultimate code for the one-player version of this game. Stephen Spencer of Crossgate and John Stanbury of Stevenage have risen to the challenge.

John's code, YR9Y#1P#S#T, gives you 30 lives, 30,704 credits, the

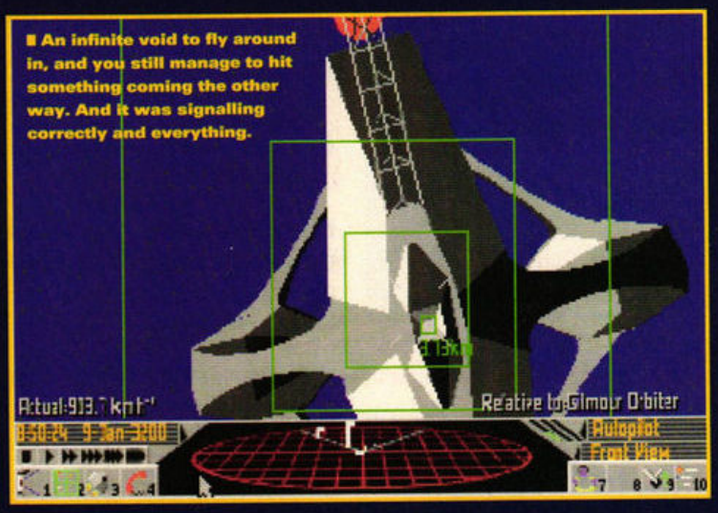
FRONTIER GAMETEK

Everybody, it seems, is eager to share their Frontier tips. You can't move here for falling over another pile explaining how to become extremely rich. However, the series that struck our fancy were slightly out of the ordinary. Here, then, is James Bird of Derby, explaining how to be a good assassin. Hurrah.

To eliminate targets above ground

After you've agreed to a contract, carefully examine the contract information under option three, noting the licence plate number, the time of the assassination and the location of the ship to be fatally compromised. Travel to this location and land at, or dock with, the same spaceport.

If this is an open spaceport, click on function ten – identification text on – select pause, and go to an external view. Spin the screen until the licence number of the target appears. If you have the Radar Mapper, use it to examine the details of the target ship. Now wait until the appointed time, using the Stardreamer Control if necessary. You can now either launch, activate your autopilot and throw everything you've got at the target, which usually leads to a fine for murder, or you can stalk your victim. Let the target jump to hyperspace, then use your Hyperspace Cloud Analyser (available from all good spaceports) to determine its destination. Now follow it at top speed, and complete the contract before the ship makes police-patrolled space.



An infinite void to fly around in, and you still manage to hit something coming the other way. And it was signalling correctly and everything.

Subterranean targets

Almost, but not quite, the same as above. If you are at an underground spaceport, launch a few seconds before the target is forecast to take off. Activate identification text, and select rear view. Upon emerging from the space doors, pull back your mouse or joystick, and apply a small amount of thrust. About ten seconds after the target has launched, pause the

CAPTAIN BLUNDER

Hello, readers. Let me apologise for my appearance. This month I attempted to arrest my arch-enemy Mister Sinister, but he beat me about the head and chest. I think I'm bleeding internally. No, don't call an ambulance. Duty comes first

Sword Master

Can you tell me how to get past the Sword Master in *The Secret of Monkey Island?* And how to pass Governor Marley's dogs?
Robert Harrop, Denton

CB: *Groan. No, I'm all right. The trick with the Sword Master is to practise fighting by challenging every pirate you meet while walking around the island map. Then, once you've built up a library of insults, go for the Sword Master. She uses different feed lines, but a little thought soon points you towards the correct response.*

Poison the dogs with the hunk of meat found in the Scumm Bar kitchen. Dip it in the stew on the stove, and garnish it with the yellow flowers from the forest maze. Wheeze.

Torture chamber

In *Lure of the Temptress*, I can only get to the torture chamber and rescue Ratpouch. The only door is locked, and I can't find the key. Can you help me?
Leigh Kennedy, Canterbury

CB: *After freeing Ratpouch, go next door and talk to Wulf, the prisoner on the wall. Give him a drink, and he advances the plot before dropping dead. Examine the wall opposite, and you find a previously disguised exit. Cough. Gargle.*

Cheesed off

In your solution to *Ishar 2* (*STF* 54), you say to pick up the living sword on Akeer's Island and "make the return trips to the north, then south, then west." Please clarify, as I'm confused and cheesed off.
A Adventurer

CB: *My ears hurt. Oooorghh. I was always told that holding your nose and blowing usually does the trick. Snort. That's better. Yes. It simply*

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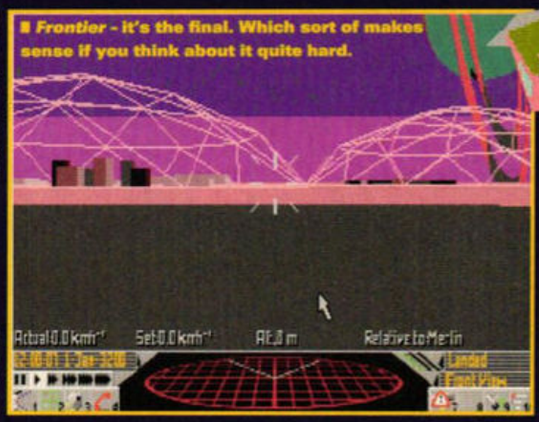
USTERS

Preacher as a CPU partner and all the power-ups and 13 weapon boosters. Stephen has sent in three codes, one for the beginning of each world (bar the first, natch). They give maximum strength, speed and lives, as well as, and we quote, "loads of cash." The codes are as follows: XJKS0MH1Z92V, C4HQY0Q4NJ3M and V7YRZK 8DI3GS. Has anyone got any codes for the two-player game?

It's time for chaos, or possibly a refreshing cup of lemon tea.

game and scan the area behind your ship for the appropriately licence numbered victim. Now attack or stalk as before.



Frontier - it's the final. Which sort of makes sense if you think about it quite hard.

Orbiting spaceport targets

Wait outside the spaceport until the appointed time, then click on the identification text, and examine the open doors to find the target.

Installing to a hard drive

Not so much a tip, more a way of playing. In *STF 56*, Roy Dent had trouble installing *Frontier* to hard disk. P Augustin (why are people so reticent about giving their first name?) has written in with a step-by-step guide that should do the trick.

First of all, get rid of Atari's X-Control Panel, as *Frontier* doesn't work with it present on a STE running GEM 1.62 or 2.6. If you're using *Neodesk*, switch on the Unload for Execute option using the Set Preferences menu. Don't forget to save this new setup. Now place Frontier. prg and your commander file in a folder on your hard drive. Place a blank disk in drive A, as the game always reads this and crashes if one is not present. Run the game. If it still doesn't work, go through your auto-boot programs and Desk Accessories to find the offending one, and, obviously, switch it off. Once the game is running, don't press the tab key, or the entire thing crashes.

In space, no one can hear you say, "Oh no, I've dropped my pen behind this instrument panel. It was a really good pen, as well. It was a Christmas present and everything."

means, "A", that, from the central place where you find the sword, you go north, return to the centre, go south, return to the centre, go west and return once again to the centre before continuing. Hence the repeated use of the word "return."

Slogging

My wife and I have been slogging our way through *Rick Dangerous* for over a year now, and we have finally ground to a halt in Level 2 of the Pyramid Section. Any cheats?
Douglas Baird, Dunfermline

CB: *Of course. Let me reach over and woob.* (Captain blacks out momentarily.) *Wha – ? Never mind. Apart from entering POOKY on the high-score table, you can also press T as the game loads, then answer Y to the question to get infinite lives. I feel ill.* (Captain slumps dramatically to one side, his special pants spilling down about his knees. Ambulance arrives, much hubbub from onlookers.)

LOOSE ENDS

With the Captain rushed to hospital in an excitingly indeterminate state of wellbeing, this seems an ideal opportunity to turn some of the more tricky questions over to you. If any of the following queries ring bells in your head, write in with the solution for a gratuitous mention from everyone's favourite tipster. (Provided that he survives until next month, of course.) Write with your answers to Captain Blunder, *ST FORMAT*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW.

Stuck

In *Loom*, by Lucasfilm, what do you do after passing the tornado? I'm just wandering around pointlessly. In Ubi Soft's *Bat 2*, I've reached Bedhin 6, but can't pass the guard.
Johann Omerrsson, Reykjavik

Stuck too

I'm trapped in *Legend*, by Mindscape. I've got all visible Ornate Keys, but I'm still stuck in Level 2 of the Dungeons of Treihadwyl. Where's the other Ornate Key for the door to Level 1?
Zaid Cummins, Edinburgh

Also stuck

I'm stuck there as well, actually.
Stacey King, Bristol

Not progressing

I'm playing *Lure of the Temptress*, by Hit Squad, and I've reached the Dragon's Cave. I've used two potions – Hassock, Elacampane and Houndstooth, and Haretooth, Lupine and Celandine – but they have no effect on the dragon. Where do I find the Cowbane to make the third potion of that, Houndstooth and Elecampane?
PJ Knight, Chadwell Heath

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CHAOS STRIKES BACK PSYGNOSIS

Following on from last month's general tips, part one of an enormously complete and frankly chunky solution for this sequel to Dungeon Master courtesy of Matthew Dixon of Darlington in County Durham

KEYS

Key>	Location and effect
Cross Key>	Found in Value For Valuables.
Emerald Key>	Found in illusionary wall maze on Ros. Opens Ros door.
Gold Key>	Opens the way to treasure and food.
Iron Key>	Opens most doors. Common throughout dungeon.
Key of B>	Three of these. Used to get the Boots of Speed on the Ful Ya Pit Level.
Master Key>	Carried by Demon. Opens way to Ful Ya Pit.
Onyx Key>	See Onyx Door.
Picks>	Carried by Gigglers.
Ra Key>	One carried by a Giggler, the second found in a chest in The Spiral. Used to open Golden Portucullises.
Ruby Key>	Opens Dain Door.
Skeleton Key>	Opens doors and skulls on walls.
Solid Key>	Carried by Mongor. Opens Ku Door.
Square Key>	See From Ku Door (Solid Key)
Topaz and Sapphire Keys>	Found on Demon Director Level.
Turquoise Key>	Opens Neta Door.
Winged Key>	Found in alcove in The Spiral. You need it to escape from this section.

Dungeon Levels

See *STF* 59 for a general overview of the levels. All levels join together on the Demon Director Level. Before you reach the Corbum Bomb Pillar you should see a sign saying Ku, Ros, Dain or Neta. You then have to overcome an ordeal to get to the Pillar.

Room of Worms

When you begin, you find yourself in darkness and stripped of all possessions. Cast a Light spell. Ignore everything. Move away from the door and prepare yourself with some fireballs. Don't return to the door until you've dealt with the Worms as this makes three more appear. One of the Worms holds the door key. Kill them with fireballs and search the alcoves. Find a torch on the floor and place it in the holder to open a secret passage.

There's a pit here, labelled "run and jump." If you fall into it you end up somewhere near the Junction. You won't make the jump if you're carrying too much, have low dexterity, or are too slow, so throw heavy items over the pit, use Temporary Dexterity spells and hold down the arrow key until you're over. The passage leads to the back of Supplies For the Quick. There's a false wall here, revealing a full suit of chainmail.

Supplies For the Quick

There are lots of objects here, but if you're slow getting around, a pit opens up beneath you. Save your game after collecting every two or three objects. If you're coming from the Supplies For the Quick side, wait for the two monsters to appear and fireball them, or you'll fall into a pit.

To one side of the room are two keyholes. Use Iron Keys in them to dispel an illusionary wall to the left of the furthest right keyhole. Behind the wall is a Vorpal Blade, but watch out for the pit. To the right of this chamber are four Ven Bombs. A Worm carries the door key, but first make sure you've got everything you want from the room.

Junction of the Ways

Each Corbum is located on one of the Ways. The teleport sends you to a pressure pad. Turning on the pad reveals each of the Ways in the order Ku, Neta, Ros and Dain. Using an Iron Key deactivates the teleport. It appears that each Way has three possible starting points, so turn on the pad 12 times to cycle through them.

What awful names. Halk sounds like a throat being cleared, Zed is dull, and Linflas? Cantinflas, more like.

Ful Ya Pit Level

Lord Chaos is teleporting around this level. If you meet him, run away. The level is big, and there are many invisible pits, so keep to the walls wherever possible. Check before taking an object that there's not a pit in front of it.

There are several teleports. Some of the accompanying slots or keyholes deactivate the teleports; others turn on new ones.

Worm Room

No problems here except the sheer number of Worms. The Dragon Sword is in here. To avoid the Black Ghost room, teleport to the Demon Chamber by activating the switch just beyond the Worm Room.

The keyhole here accepts the Onyx Key, but it's a red herring.

Demon Room

No problems here. Stay behind the door to destroy the four demons, then get the key one of them was carrying.

Black Ghost Room

Make sure you keep to the walls. The Ghosts regenerate. Don't use the Skeleton Key as it opens up the Demon Chamber, and you lose the key.

Demon Chamber

This is a bad room. Don't press the switch by the entrance – it just widens the door. One of the far too many Demons is carrying the Master Key. Head for the room beyond the line of the wall that's level with the teleport alcove, because only four demons can get in here.

The passage beyond always has Demons and Ghosts in it, but to get through to reach the Ful Ya Pit. You need the Master Key to open the final door. Save your Ful Bombs and other magic attacks for this section.

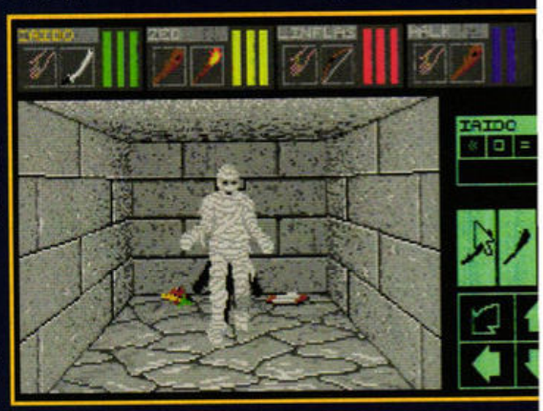
Ful Ya Pit

Once you've found them, throw the four Corba at the Flame Monster on the other side of the pit to end the game.

Ku Section

Many monsters in this section are poisonous, so have an empty flask and anti-venom potions ready. As you walk along the corridor, the disk is accessed. When it stops, go back to the altar and get the key. At the top of the stairs, prepare some fireballs. Go down the stairs to find a gang of Blue Antmen armed with clubs. Stay on the stairs and blast them.

Don't try to sneak past and run down the first passage on the right as it teleports you to a hidden alcove. Instead, once you've finished off the Antmen, loot the bodies, prepare more fireballs, and



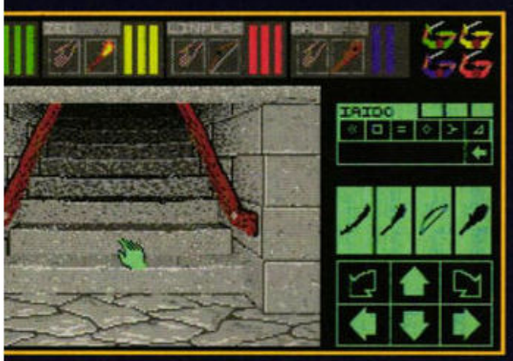
Particularly useless monsters, mummies. All they have to do is get snagged on a nail and that's it.

carry on downwards. Clear this room of Spiders. Note the Skeleton Keyhole on the wall. Go down.

Executioner Level

Mummies regenerate near the stairs. Look closely for near-invisible pits on the floor. Going right leads to a staircase, which in turn leads to an altar. Beware of the double doors – one set leads to a staircase going down, but the other leads to a pit which drops you on top of a Dragon.

Go left to find some pressure pads. Stand on one, then rush through the portcullis before it closes. The room that you enter contains four Death Knights. Run to the alcove and take the Executioner's Axe. Replace it with one of the clubs looted from the Blue Antmen, or you get locked in. Now run out of the room without attacking the Death Knights. You can now pick them off one by one as they wander the complex. Don't forget to leave their armour – it's cursed.



■ Could be a pair of large hockey sticks, or the antennae of a big ant, but probably isn't.

No Fireballs Room

Aptly named, as sometimes your fireballs curve back to hit you. There are Munchers and Mummies here. Straight ahead is a staircase leading up to an altar, but stop halfway across the room and turn right towards the portcullis. There are two Vexirks here, lobbing fireballs back and forth. Duck into the portcullis alcove and lob the fireballs back at the Vexirks until they are destroyed. Press the Gems in the walls, but not the one facing the Ghoul's head as a Death Knight appears right behind you.

A passageway is opened, leading to a black door guarded by a Death Knight. Kill him and break open the door to reveal a clan of Vexirks. Dodge back and forth to try to line them up, so they all fireball each other. If this fails, kill a few at a time, pressing the wall Gems to seal the passage and recuperating in between. Once all the Vexirks are dead, loot the bodies. At the end of the room you find a secret passage leading to the Executioner Room.

Mongor's Level

You arrive here sooner or later; either by design or by falling into a pit. Mongor is a Dragon. He also commands a mob of Worms. The easiest way to kill Mongor is to lure him to the bottom of a staircase, dodging up and down it until he succumbs to your fireballs. Loot the body to find the Solid Key, and then search the level to uncover its Onyx counterpart.

There's a wall switch next to a grating. Press it, then move two squares to the right and go forwards. This passage now leads to a staircase and some treasure. Return to the start of the Ku Section. Once at the altar, move forwards one square, turn left and walk into the wall. There's a Scorpion here, so have your spells prepared. Don't wait around, as more Scorpions appear. Instead, hurry through the level to the room with the slot in the wall. Inserting Gor Coins rewards you with random but terribly useful items. Go the bottom of the stairs marked "Demon Director."

Demon Director Level

There are monsters and pits aplenty here. Taking the water flask from the alcove opens a pit beneath you. Reset the trap by pressing the wall switch found by the first Flame Monster. The Demons follow you if you try to flee, and if you kill one another appears. Be particularly wary of the pits, as all but one lead straight to a Dragon. Coming back through this part of the level at a later stage can be difficult as there are often plenty of Demons abroad.

To pass the rest of the level, return to the top and wait for the pit to close. Destroy the waiting Demon, and, following the advice on the wall and scrolls, charge through the room. The Rock Monsters should activate the pressure pads to close the pit. Now find the pit marked, "Trust me," and jump in.

■ Some sort of small tree, in a gloomy corridor, blocking a doorway. Yesterday.

BBBD Level

Plunder the treasure room and go up, ignoring the pressure pad for the moment. You're now back on the Demon Director Level. Avoid the pressure pad in front of you, as this activates poisonous Green Blobs. Go around the corner to find a Stone Golem. Kill it and put its club on the pad to deactivate the blobs.

In the Dragon's Den, let the Death Knights follow you into the last passageway until they teleport behind you. Now make your way back to BBBD Level, and try not to go this way again, because you'll get stuck between the Knights you tricked and another four.

Stand on the pad in the Dragon Level to make the wall disappear. This room houses Dragon the Dragon. Lure him to the stairs as you did with Mongor. Dragon has a silly amount of health points, so be ready for a long battle. If he's looking at you as you come down the stairs, go straight back up very quickly indeed. On this level are two staircases. The ascending one leads to Flame Monsters, the descending steps go to an altar. Prepare Kill Ghost spells and go up. Blast through the monsters to reach the Sapphire Key in the left alcove, then go to the staircase at the end of the room.

Big Golem Level

Beware invisible pits. The second Gold Key opens the door. Behind the door is a tough Golem. Destroy it from the safety of the stairs.

Descent from Top Level

Two staircases lead down to a maze populated by Golems. This is best avoided. Eventually you come to a door opened with the Skeleton Key. If you stumble into Neverending Passage by mistake, leave by walking through the walls to find a skeleton lock. This leads to the back of Big Golem Level. The companion to Neverending Passage, Lightning Alley, features a wall switch. Don't press it, as it sends bolts down the passage. Walking into the section on your left opens a pit behind you. The staircase leading down goes to the Demon Director Level. You need the Ruby Key before using these steps. Go to the wall which reads, "Stand on the pressure plate." Before you is a portcullis. Cast Open Lock and follow it up quickly with some fireballs to kill the lurking Demon. Once it's dead, the pit in front of you closes.

Value For Valuables

Keep putting items on the teleport until the wall opens. You get all the items back. Behind the wall is a Cross Key. Go down the stairs and use the key to reveal a sword. Go back up the stairs and open the locked door. Kill the Flame Monsters, but don't press the button near the portcullis. Close the pit with the lever and open the door with the Ruby Key.

The pit resets whenever you return to the room, so stand on the pressure pad to get back over. Go down, and down again. Lure the Skeleton in the next room to the opposite side of the pit and press the button. Lure the Skeleton into the teleport to send it behind the portcullis, and kill it with target weapons to open the barrier. Use the Turquoise Key from Neta Level to open the door. The Golden Shield here is protected by a fireball trap, so stand just before the bend in the passageway and walk into the wall. Opposite the golden keyhole is a false wall. Watch out for the sneak thief here.

■ Players looking for a challenge should rename all their characters Basil. It's no end of fun in a dangerous fight.

The room beyond has two teleports. Both lead to Neta Level; the left returns you to the start, while the right exits in the Blob Room. ***stf***

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HiSoft BASIC 2 shows off its AGA support

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The editor takes full advantage of the new features of Workbench 2 and Workbench 3 and there is a version of the editor that emulates many of the advanced features of Workbench 2 under Workbench 1.3.

The Compiler

HiSoft BASIC 2 is a compiler that feels like an interpreter when you use it from within the integrated environment. It takes source code either directly or via the *include* statement and produces fast, efficient 68000 code; it is also possible to pre-tokenise your source code to obtain maximum speed of compilation. The syntax is highly compatible with other implementations including Microsoft QuickBASIC™ (PC), AmigaBASIC etc. allowing modern, structured programming with a high degree of portability between different machines. The graphics commands built into HiSoft BASIC let you take advantage of the AGA chip set.

You can link with assembly language and SAS/Lattice C programs and compile to memory for testing or compile to disk to produce your final, standalone masterpiece.

The Debugger

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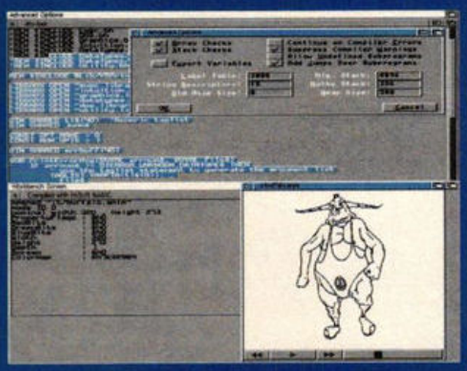

Even Animation Datatypes are easy!

The Libraries

HiSoft BASIC 2 comes with libraries that let you access the features of all versions of the Amiga operating system from Workbench 1.3 up to Workbench 3.1. The standard Amiga names are used, as described in the ROM Kernel manuals, making it easy to translate examples from C. There are examples of using and displaying IFF files, Datatypes, Gadtools gadgets & menus, Tasks, Sound etc.

The Package

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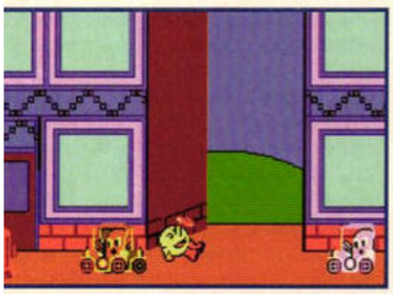
The staff of *STF* didn't waste their youth in arcades playing coin-op games. They couldn't get in because of all the other people who write this kind of factually suspect article

COIN-UPS TO CONSOLES



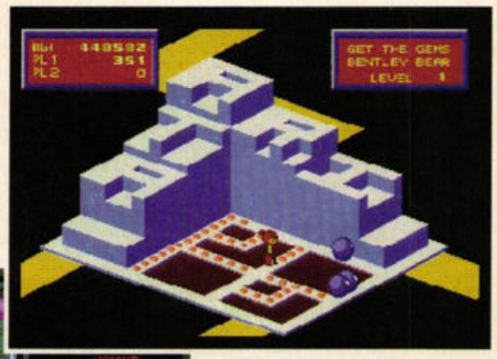
Pac-Land, a travesty of a mockery of a sham of the original.

Tempest 2000 has it. (In fact, most of Minter's games have it.) *The Chaos Engine* has it as well, but *Jimmy White's Snooker* doesn't. (Not that that's necessarily a bad thing.) What are we edging around unnecessarily mysteriously? That Arcade Feeling, of course. The elusive fast-paced, panicky feeling all action games so desperately want to capture in an effort to be just like their coin-op idols.

From the beginning, coin-ops have endeavoured to perfect the instant, short-term hit of speeding graphics and nerves aflame. Even *Pong*, that Atari cornerstone, succeeds in frightening players with its white-hot reaction demands. (When our sister magazine *Amiga Power* featured a PD version on their Cover Disk, work ground to a halt as friendly games exploded into 51-round grudge matches.) But how to get from *Pong* to *T2K* in a series of easy steps? Sit back, acolyte, and bask in our collective and only marginally smug wisdom as we drag the muddy rivers of coin-op history to make Atari look really good and try to persuade you *Battlezone 2000* won't be as unbearably dull as the original...

Origin of the species

Your basic arcade game has but one function: to take your money. The ideal game, experts say, hooks you instantly, mesmerises you for



Crystal Castles - A true arcade superstar.

Gauntlet, on the best four player arcades ever seen. Play with friends and steal their treasure - splendid.

How come the PD versions *Pacman* were better than the original?

ATARISOFT

Before adopting the Tengen label, Atari tried to capture that Arcade Feeling for the home computer market with their very own imaginatively-titled coin-op conversion label, Atarisoft. Oh what great excitement it caused: at last, correct conversions of everyone's favourite arcade games.

But, cruelly, it was not to be. Although there were a few that did manage to get it dead right – among them the ugly but supremely playable *Asteroids Deluxe*, the ugly but supremely playable *Millipede*, and the supremely playable and mould-breakingly pretty *Joust* – the majority were horribly inept hatchet jobs. *Pacman*, for example, managed by dint of great effort to be worse than nearly all the PD versions, while sequel *Pacland* appeared more interested in loading things from disk than letting you play the game.

But the star of the collection had to be *Tempest*. Audaciously redesigning the game by having the Flipper monsters spiral out of the web straight at you rather than, for example, flip, it was astonishingly difficult in an entertainingly unplayable sort of way. Sadly, the Atarisoft titles are no longer available, and there are no plans on Atari's part to restock them. Even worse, an attempt to put them out in the Public Domain was scuppered when the original coin-op manufacturers demanded heavy royalties. Such a great shame.

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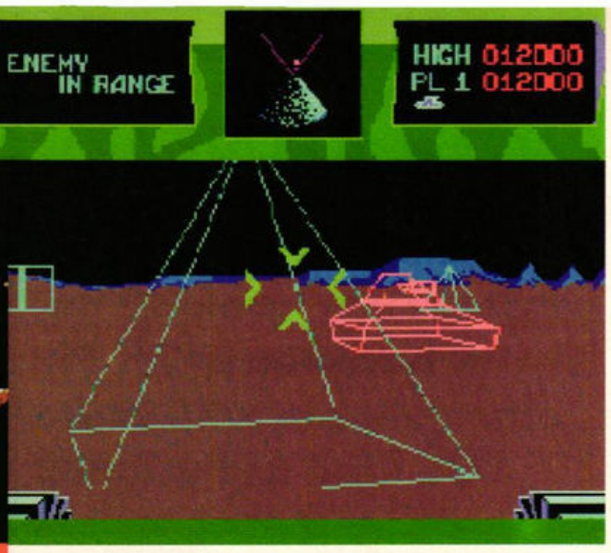
Left: *Moon Patrol* enabled you to patrol the moon - he said humourlessly.

Joust was so good it was banned. Well the copyright was enforced, which is shame, but justifiable.



The "exciting" tank blast *Battlezone*. Well some people liked. A few at the very least, well he did!

Millipede a game so daft, so silly it had to be brilliant. And it was.

two minutes and then kills you off. So how do they explain the appeal of *Defender*? Staggeringly complicated controls fronting a game you couldn't hope to become proficient at in less than seven goes. Fools.

Early coin-ops used the *Wrist Splinter* principle: each level of the game was structurally identical to the previous, with monsters getting harder and faster, until, inevitably, you lost, or your legs cramped, or your wrists splintered at the hinge. The aforementioned *Defender* and Atari's *Asteroids* were the twin peaks of this type of game and probably claimed the sporting careers of over 7,000 youngsters. But then Phoenix introduced variety with attack waves and a huge final guardian, and before you knew it you could complete a game without sustaining any debilitating limb injuries.

Most of the games (home or coin-op) around today are either beat-'em-ups, shoot-'em-ups or driving games. For these timeless and not at all effigy-rending genres, we have to thank *Kung Fu Master* (a boring horizontal scroller with half-hearted opponents and magnificently terrible music), *Space Invaders* (oh, come on) and Atari's token submission, *Pole Position*. It wasn't the first driving game, but it was the first to play well and the first to feature sampled speech ("Brebare to qualify," hilariously mid-Atlantic twang fans). So good you can almost forgive it for inspiring so many awful clones, for, sadly predictably, many of the groundbreaking original coin-ops were followed by hopelessly similar rivals. But bobbing in the morass of banality were machines by truly legendary manufacturers Williams (not Atari. Sorry). Williams specialised in hugely challenging games like the control-awash *Defender*. *Joust*, for example, featured inertia and gravity as you pounded a fly button to keep your ostrich aloft, and *Robotron* boasted two joysticks, the second used to control the direction of your gun. Absolute madness, really.

"That Arcade Feeling. The elusive fast-paced, panicky feeling all action games want to capture"

Atari again

Our heroes were left rather out in the cold at this point, due to the amazingly gruesome crash of the entire company (as detailed in the surprisingly entertaining *Game Over* by David Sheff). But one large sale later, and Atari Games were ready to bounce back with coin-op fun aplenty, including *Gauntlet*, obscure but well worth the chase *Gauntlet*-in-3D *Xybots*, *Gauntlet*-with-smaller-graphics *Crackdown*, and *Gauntlet 2*. Atari had also discovered licensing, and a cascade of Tengen-labelled coin-op conversions rained down upon the likes of the ST, largely disappointing but occasionally getting it right. The problem was so glaringly obvious that no one spotted it: namely, how do you squeeze a dedicated and enormously expensive arcade game into a home computer? Answer: you don't, but make failure a spectator sport.

Things bobbled along comfortably poorly, with coin-op conversions announced, delayed, released, panned and sold off to budget labels, and then the Jaguar appeared. Suddenly there was a machine that could do justice to the coin-op ideals of showoffily impressive presentation and disposably exciting gameplay. Enter Minter with his love of old arcade games, and *Tempest 2000* was more or less to be expected, which brings us back to the beginning in a neatly circular sort of way. We can only hope that Atari commissions a whole batch of coin-op conversions for their lumpy 64-bit – *Asteroids 2000*, perhaps, or *Robotron 2084 2000*. Or something. **stf**

COMMUNITY WATCH

Arcades are not only for playing games. Hours of fun and generous financial recompense can be had by watching people doing the following things and then reporting them to the relevant authorities. Remember folks, follow the example of your friends at STF or shun these despicable scams. And shun these despicable scams. Blast

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1 The culturally automatic and endlessly optimistic flipping open of the coin return slot to check if someone's forgotten to take away their rejected money. Advanced coin gropers employ a battery of convincing diversions to make it look like they doing anything but coin groping. These include the Dispirited Twiddle, where you wander about aimlessly as if the uninterested friend of an emplaced game fan, fiddling elaborately with the controls of random cabinets with one hand while coin groping with the other; the Slippery Comestible, where you lose all motor control and have continually to crouch down to coin slot level in order recover your property; and the Speed Bluff, where you stroll quickly down a vacant row, staring fixedly ahead while groping each cabinet momentarily.

The Tuppenny Spin Twist

2 Tragically curtailed by newer cabinet design, this stalwart of the Saturday Out Treat involves taking a handful of two pence pieces and attempting to trick the coin-op into thinking they are ten pences by spinning the coin violently as you insert it and leaning wildly for good luck.

The Clothes Hanger

3 In a manner similar to opening a car door, you unfold the wire and *(No. Ed)*

The Intimidating Advice

4 Picking a victim playing a game you've never before seen, you stand to one side and offer loudly blunt advice plucked at random from your craven imagination. Be sure to take the credit if the player succeeds by some insane fluke.

The Short Change

5 Selecting a manned change booth, compete with your friends to see how many pennies short of a pound you can still get accepted as the equivalent of ten ten-pence pieces.

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ST FORMAT's story is inextricably linked the ST, Atari and the whims of the computing universe. Now the times have changed, the ST's grown up into the Falcon, the Jaguar's finally arrived and you can't buy an STFM for love nor money. But things were different then, back in the day, when all this was fields you know...

■ The range of ST's are announced and a new magazine comes onto the scene. Borne out of *ST Amiga* FORMAT comes the one and only *ST FORMAT*.

DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN?

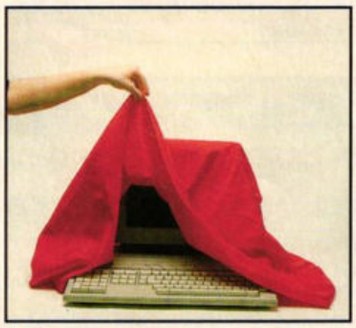
August 1989

■ STE announced.

■ Panel of editors worldwide voted the 1040ST the best computer of the year.

■ Mega 1 released.

■ *Bloodwych* 95% – "represents the way forward in computer role playing." Great two-player mode.



September 1989

■ Sam Tramiel predicts combined sales of two million Lynxes, Portfolio and ST laptop. Tramiel states that within the next five years "We'll dominate the handheld market and kill off Nintendo."

Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988 comes into effect, threatening stiffer penalties, heavy fines and imprisonment to act as a deterrent to pirates.

■ *Blood Money* 90% "better than any other ST shoot-'em-up" Atari advertise!

■ *Cubase* is released to some excitement although £500 price tag is off-putting

■ The top Atari ST magazine, the top Atari peeps. The two are totally inseparable - of course!

October 1989

■ 1040STE officially released at a massive £499.

■ TT released for an even massiver amount – £2,000.

■ Jack Tramiel "Atari is committed to the personal computer business; back in '77 I made machines affordable to the masses, I haven't forgotten that commitment."

PD reviews a kid's DTP program called *Publish and be spanked.*

Strider – 92% "playable and immensely addictive."

November 1989

■ Despite expectations that the PC Show would see the launch of a new range of TOS based machines, the TT, STE and STacy; they are banished to a small area at the back of the Atari stand. PR manager Peter Walker explains that Atari "didn't think they would sell." Attention instead focuses on a 286 PC. The STacy is later discontinued because of problems with a lack of battery life.

■ Atari expected the STE to replace the 1040 ST within a year, despite criticism from Jez San (now of Arg-

■ The STacy [illegible] neat machine [illegible]

www.stformat.com

Trev Gilham (Art Editor *STF issues* 8 – 13. Now Art development editor of *Games Players* in San Francisco) :
"It has to be the time we, or rather I, chose to stick a big black hand connected to a small Paul Morgan (the then Art Assistant) to illustrate the pirating of ST games for the cover. The previous ish, we'd had a white hand on the cover and it came out all pink and blotchy so I thought I'll use a hand with a more even skin tone instead, that'll come out great. I didn't really think about the implications, some people saw it as racist, but it was just an art thing, honest!"

onaut) and Wayne Smithson (programmer of *Lemmings 2).*

■ Interphase – 93% "bursting with new ideas."

December 1989

■ Following criticism of the STE by developers in *STF* 4, Atari threaten to withdraw development machines. "Developers can have opinions but they should keep them to themselves. We're furious, and you can print that!" We do.

■ *Tower of Babel* – 94% "the mixture of excellent graphics and strategy make this such a success."

■ First version of *Neodesk* is reviewed "outclasses the GEM Desktop in all departments."

January 1990

■ Supplies of 1040 STE start to appear in the UK and miss the Christmas market. As for software that is expected to appear to take advantage of its capabilities "the software applications that make full use of the STE aren't really available yet, they're expected in the first quarter of next year."

■ *Batman* gets 90% – "game has remained faithful to the film, expected to reach number one in the charts."

February 1990

■ STE incompatibility is discovered *STOS* doesn't work, Mandarin have to produce a patch which is released into PD.

■ STacy makes its first appearance in the high street stores.

■ First colour digitiser for the ST, Realtiser is released by Third Coast Technologies.

■ *Ironlord* gets 90% – not too sure about it though "Had *Ironlord* been released a year or two ago, the graphics alone would have guaranteed its success, but now there needs to be much more to a game." Pardon?

March 1990

■ A special news feature as to what went wrong with the release of the STE reveals "unfortunately during the hands-on review stage, it appears that no-one bothered to test the machine for compatibility with existing software." As is traditional the manufacturers blame the developers "If the programmers had written to our specifications then there wouldn't be any problems" and while some PD libraries reckon that up to 80% of their software was incompatible, Atari put the figure around five per cent – their figure later turns out to be more accurate.

■ *Gravity* earns 93% from the ill-fated Mirrorsoft – "electrifying strategic game."

April 1990

■ The reason for the Christmas STE debacle becomes clear. The machines failed to make it into the country as Atari had hoped because a dockstrike at Folkestone before Christmas upset marketing plans and caused general shortages of the ST. So they had to fly 20,000 into the country!

■ Two great games this month – *Midwinter* 96% – we even agreed that MicroProse's hype about this huge adventure/strategy game could be right.

■ Plus the cute and cuddly *Rainbow Islands,* brilliant coin-op conversion 93%

■ The sanity saving *Knife ST* is released – powerful selection of programs together.

June 1990

■ Atari face piracy charges by the Business Software Alliance which allege that Atari have engaged in unauthorised copying of software in their business operations – something that happened a lot in Taiwan. Jack Tramiel's response is to say that Atari itself loses millions of dollars a year through piracy and the BSA does absolutely nothing to stop it. Ironically this month's lead feature explores and attacks software piracy.

■ *Populous* wins the ECTS award for best strategy game, most original game and game of the year; best ST product is Spectre GCR, the Mac emulator; and *Kick Off* wins the sports simulator of the year award.

■ *Resolution 101* – 93% "utterly original in appearance, scenario and gameplay... enormously, sickeningly addictive."

■ 15% of *ST FORMAT* readers have single-sided drives.

July 1990

■ A special music issue in which we gave away a tape as well, featuring doodlings and the finished product of ST-related fiddling about. The ST is definitely the music machine.

■ Two game classics released: *Sim City* – 93%, part of the by-now well-established genre of god games – and in this one you get to play mayor and keep the finances straight and the public happy – so addictive it's frightening.

■ *F19 Stealth Fighter* – 96% – has enough strategy and variety to prove that MicroProse can still keep ahead of the competition, an excellent investment and about

August 1990

■ Tramiel: "We'll probably bring out a low price CD drive for today's STs and then bring out a CD within an ST as one machine as well... We certainly have everything ready and now that the software people are behind CD we can start moving very quickly."

■ *Damocles* – 94% "the superbly designed plot peels back piece by piece to reveal a wealth of intrigue, twisted logic and dry humour... *Damocles* keeps pulling you back to the screen, no matter how much you want to go to bed."

September 1990

■ Preview of *Deluxe Paint* – this single utility could turn the ST art market on its head.

■ TOS 1.4 makes its very first appearance.

■ The first solderless RAM upgrades for the ST from Evesham show their faces.

■ *Kick Off 2* 92% – "the best football sim just got a whole lot better" *Magic Fly* 91% – "isn't so much a game as an experience."

October 1990

■ *Deluxe Paint* is the first "serious" ST package to earn a *ST FORMAT* Gold, it is "unbeatable."

■ *Operation Stealth* – 93% "looks good, sounds good and is seductively exciting."

■ Introduction of the gallery page – naming it the Kandy Coloured Tangerine Flake Streamlined Picture Show (after the Tom Wolfe anthology and on my suggestion, curiosity fans) this is intended as a one-off but the name sticks.

November 1990

■ STEs incompatible with some hard drives because of the faulty DMA chip which can feasibly damage hard disk data. Despite third party suppliers saying they had experienced problems with up to 50% of supplies of STEs, Atari maintained that "only a small batch of STEs were affected" and that they believed the problem had "gone away" the previous July.

■ The Bitmap Brothers brake away from their publishers, Mirrorsoft, to form their own Renegade label.

■ First rumours surface of new machines from Atari. We say Atari are to launch their own console, codenamed Panther, which would be based on ST technology. Distribution is expected to start in summer '91.

■ Plus this strange one "Rumours are also circulating of a mid range ST, placed somewhere between the TT and the standard ST and codenamed Jaguar. With an appearance date sometime in the spring of '91, the computer is expected to have a price tag of around £750."

■ *Captive* is the game of the month earning 93% – "takes the best from the accepted standard and adds to it."

December 1990

■ First reports of the ST Transputer surface, it is expected to cost no more than a printer (didn't say what sort of printer, though) – the only real details are that it is expected to run at speeds of between 15 and 20 MIPs.

■ *Gettysburg* – 93% a rewarding wargame.

■ Also this month came *BAT* – a revolutionary graphics adventure 92% – and *Legend of Faerghail* – 90% – a beautifully polished RPG.

Christmas 1990 - the ST goes into games frenzy.

■ Compo enter the UK on their own terms rather than getting Gasteiner to do their distribution for them. This causes ructions between Gasteiner and Compo and their bid to bring German software to the UK with translations and so on.

■ Atari hold a whistle stop train tour which visits Bristol, Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, Glasgow and Birmingham to show off their machines.

January 1991

■ *ST FORMAT* give the full version of *Interphase* away on disk – initiating a disk war.

■ The Mega STE is unveiled. It's twice as fast as the STE.

www.stformat.com

■ The launch of the luggable STacy announced. This time with the battery problem solved.
■ TOS v2 is launched.
■ Peter Staddon, the then marketing manager of Atari, was insisting that underlying management problems of the company were firmly behind them; "there is a new determination at Atari to put the past behind them."
■ Scarey (Editor, Steve Carey) wrote an open letter to Bob Gleadow asking what they were going to do to solve the problems that had plagued them over the previous year but in response all he could say was that the next year was going to be big and successful with an even greater emphasis on computers, but they weren't prepared to discuss Atari's plans for the following year.
■ *Supremacy* – 90% Uses stunning visuals with heaps of magnificently atmospheric animation.

"Something called the Jaguar - an obscure 64-bit RISC machine gets the nod over the 32-bit Panther - will it ever see the light of day?"

February 1991
■ *ST FORMAT* Gold Reader Awards of 1990
■ Game of the year: *Sim City*
■ Serious program: *Deluxe Paint*
■ Company of the year: Evesham Micros
■ Softie of the year: MicroProse
■ PDL of the year: Goodmans

■ *STF* Team awards include:
■ Game of the year: *F19 Stealth Fighter*
■ Art/graphics program of the year: *Deluxe Paint*
■ Software utility: *Neodesk 3*

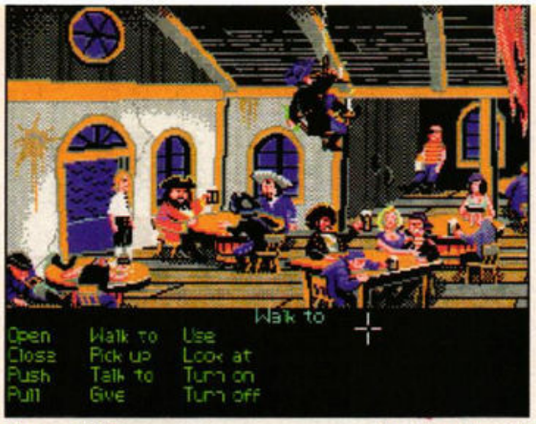
■ Dustbin awards:
Cockup of the year: STE – "signs are that Atari are on the way to recovery, but they cannot afford another such Golden Turkey."
■ Feb's top games are *Powermonger* – 93%. "One of the most absorbing games around."
■ *Battle Command* – 93% "a high quality shoot-'em-up cum strategy game."

March 1991
■ Claims of up to 2.5 million STs worldwide are made.
■ It is revealed that Populous was the biggest-selling game of 1989 and one of the top five 16-bit titles ever, selling 46,000 copies on the ST alone.
■ *MiG-29 fulcrum* 92% – "an excellent unmissable flight sim"
■ *Enchanted Lands* – 92% – "Easy to get into but nigh on impossible to put down."

April 1991
■ STE price cuts of around £100 are rumoured.
■ Wrath of the Demon is the only other real high point – at 88% good, but not that good.

May 1991
■ The Mega STE official launch.
■ *Family Curriculum Pack* launched at £399.
■ The 520STE Turbo pack gets price cut.
■ New ST's announced. There's the ST Pad – with a pen and paper interface so you write directly onto the screen – and the ST Book – laptop with internal hard drive.
■ *STF* comments "It seems as if things are finally beginning to work out for Atari."
■ Bob Gleadow "we're building a platform for new growth based on the half a million people who already own an ST."
■ Tramiel confirms that the Panther is "definitely happening."
■ The first talks of general MIDI standard.
■ There are three *FORMAT* Golds this month:
■ *The Killing Cloud* – 93% – "almost every cloud has a silver lining but this cloud's is gold."
■ *Cybercon 3* – 91% – a lasting challenge with 3D graphics to match.
■ *Gods* – 92% – "a cunning combination of platforms, puzzles and bloody-minded aliens."

The Atari ST packs - proven winners time and time again.



Is this the funniest game ever to appear on the ST? Well, erm, yes actually.

June 1991
■ There are major updates of all big DTP programs – *Calamus, Pagestream* and *Proxima.*
■ System Solutions aim to cater for the professional/serious ST user.
■ An 11% drop in sales over the preceding year is announced which Atari blamed on the Gulf War.
■ *The Secret of Monkey Island* – 94% "What really raises this above other graphic adventures is the superb quality of the humour."
■ *The Killing Game Show* – 90% "*Going for Gold* was never like this, surely?"
■ Our reader survey reveals that a staggering 72% of you get involved with programming whereas 96% play games.

July 1991
■ Even more price reductions for 520 STE.
■ Peter Staddon of Atari admits, of Atari's past marketing skills, "We've been quite arrogant towards the outside world."
■ The ST in its various guises dominates the MIDI music fair.
■ *Lemmings* – 94% "*Lemmings* is damn near perfect." OK. Are you happy now?

August 1991
■ News of the Falcon first emerges and Tramiel claims there would be four new STs coming out in 1992. Falcon first intended to combine new technologies such as CDi drives with a high end operating system such as Unix in a bundle with high end technology.
■ Something called the Jaguar – an obscure 64-bit RISC machine gets the nod over the 32-bit Panther – will it ever see the light of day?
■ As for games, well this month, there was no new game of the decade. *Germ Crazy* did quite well (88%) but was still a little unwell.

September 1991
■ The big news is the CD drive for the Falcon. With a massive 650MByte of storage it sounds too good to be true. And when it comes to new ST machines the ever hungry STF news crew were apparently "pulling them out of us like teeth" which isn't particularly pleasant image even if it is true.
■ The ST comes out of the closet as the computer behind those machines used to print business cards in service stations and shopping malls. Wow. I think?
■ The price of a brand spanking new TT is cut to £2000 in a bid to rival Apple in the document processing arena.
■ *Midwinter, Hunter, Armour Geddon, F-15 Strike Eagle 2* all make the *FORMAT* Gold standard with 92%, 92%, 91% and 90% respectively. Obviously the military motif was in vogue.

October 1991
■ *Cranach*, the true colour digital re-touching package is launched, hot on the heels of Atari's recently announced bid for the document processing market. It enables you to work with "true" colour images as TIFF's.
■ Sam Tramiel gives *STF* an in-depth interview and promises all-manner of new ST goodies by the end of the year – most of which did see the light of day, but a little later than planned.
■ The games were coming on strong this autumn with *Flight Of The Intruder* 92%, *Whirlwind Snooker* 94%, *Mega-Lo-Mania* 94%, *Magic Pockets* 90% and *MicroProse Golf* 95%.

Mark Higham (Games Editor *STF* 1-20, Editor *STF* 20-36. Now development editor of *Games Players*, an American console magazine in San Francisco):
" I guess my most vivid recollection was when Steve Carey took over as Editor and power went to his head. He decided it was time for a clean sweep and tossed everything in the bin – we spent weeks calling all the publishers to get it back "

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Swift 200 24pin Colour	£154	£180.95
Swift 240 24pin Mono	£174	£204.45
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Epson

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LX850 9pin Mono	£139	£163.33
LQ570+ 24pin Mono	£199	£233.83
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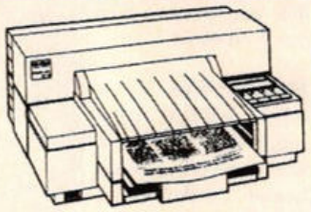

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■ Why did the Xtra pack ads imply you'd be electrocuted?

November 1991

■ Atari get serious about some 44 PD games and utilities which massively breach copyright – because they were never put in the public domain in the first place. Neochrome and Tempest are just a few of the titles Atari reassert their control over.

■ The Christmas sales campaign kicks off with the 520 and 1040 STE packs leading the way. A £2 million ad campaign hits the media stressing that the ST is "Seriously the better computer". But we all knew that already Sam...

■ Fractals provide the cover feature (along with a rather nifty Cover Disk program) as Messrs. Jackson, Higham and Ricketts all go ape over butterfly wing theories, chaos and Julia sets.

■ *Pagestream 2* is released. It offers major publishing power for a couple of hundred quid.

■ *Railroad Tycoon* should be the dullest games in all of history but turns out to be really rather splendid. *Damn*, 93%. *Thunder Hawk* (91%) isn't half bad either, but that was about helicopters, and people like them.

■ Oh and someone called Paula Richards joins *STF*.

December 1991

■ Atari (strange how every single entry starts the same way huh?) get jumpy as a rush of ST orders for in time for Christmas mean that stocks run desperately low. It is "virtually impossible to get hold of new machines" fume retailers. Atari are taken a bit by surprise at the success of the Family Curriculum Pack and plead "we've underestimated the target for ST sales."

■ The poor old STacy gets canned by fate once more. This time it incurs a ban from US homes because it emits too many spurious radio frequencies. And all this at the very same time that the ST Book and STylus are about to hit full production

■ *Utopia* (which in my personal opinion is still one of the most loathesome games ever written) makes Mr Ricketts very happy though. He gives it 90%. *Vroom* was much more like it – all the fun of *F1* and none of the danger – earns 92%. Hurrah.

January 1992

■ The Mega STE eventually makes it to the UK. The new mid-range machine sports all the regular STE kit plus a few a few originally developed for the top-level TT. It costs £821.33 (with MByte RAM) and promises to be the bridge between the serious and home market.

■ *STOS 3D* is released and threatens to "take creation on the Atari ST to new heights and to blow the Public Domain world apart."

■ On the leisure side *Populous 2* weighs in with the truly god-like score of 95%.

February 1992

■ After many years of begging, pleading, hoping and praying, Atari eventually release the full manuals for the ST and STE. "We want you to produce astonishing new products that enhance the value of our computers." Well so do we! The problem of an ancient and by now defunct non-disclosure agreement is resolved and the five "DocSupports" are published.

■ The ST Book arrives this month trumpets the news pages. A nation holds its breath.

■ And with it held, plays *Robocod* which was pretty darned nifty, but not stunning. It scored 86% and was the best game on offer.

March 1992

■ "*ST FORMAT* stops supporting the obsolete single-sided (disk) format." Editor Mark Higham rants as *STF* switches to double sided Cover Disks. A bit of a step, but with a splendid upgrade offer running at the same time, it's about time. We want to give you more and bigger programs to help you get more from your ST after all.

■ After their best run of games ever (*Mega-Lo-Mania, Flight Of The Intruder* etc) Mirrorsoft promptly vanish. Due to Mr Maxwell's swimming accident, this long standing software house disappears so nobody can get the games. Grrr.

"*Deluxe Paint* is the first "serious" ST package to earn a *ST FORMAT* Gold, it is unbeatable"

■ *STOS 3D* is a welcome hybrid release – enabling beginners to access the weird world of 3D game creation. Stunning stuff and about time too.

■ Mercenary 3, the delayed sequel to the massively late *Damocles* proves that patience is a virtue. It scores 90%.

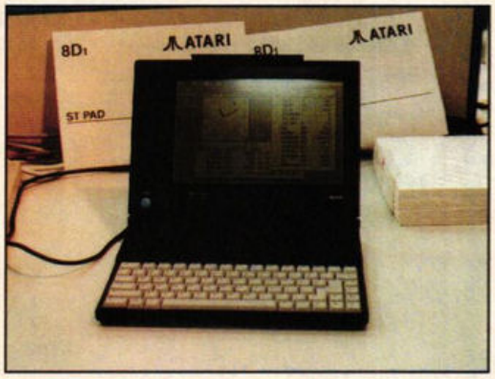
April 1992

■ The Stylus is dead. *ST FORMAT* exclusively reveal that the "pen and pad" interfaced machine will now never see the light of day (sob). Another new machine is mooted however, but this time details are sketchy.

■ The wonderful curiosities that are exchange rates mean prices of new STs plummet. The 520 STE Xtra Pack drops to £299 and the TT 030/2 is down to a mere £1, 166.

■ On the games front *Another World* sets new standards for animation. Stunning pics, evil gameplay and a great plot makes it well worth 93% of anyone's money.

■ *STF* takes on a new technical writer. Welcome, if you will ladies and gentlemen, the one and only Clive Parker.



■ The ST Book. Nice idea folks. Will it work? Yes. Will it sell? Well, to tell the truth probably not.

May 1992

■ It is confirmed that MutliTOS, which enables ST's to truly multitask applications, would be made available so ST users can upgrade machines. Sam Tramiel stated "the whole issue is (now) to make sure it will be compatible with existing packages which were not written to be multi-tasking."

■ The new ST hinted that was at in April, is now confirmed as the Falcon (again).

■ The laptop ST Book finally turns up for review, and despite a few minor niggles, it looks to be a really rather neat little number.

■ Ocean turn in a game of the movie that beggars belief. The film was *Robocop 3*, which was so bad it has still to receive a commercial release. The game was a multi-perspective 3D epic that was simply so good, we have to give 94%.

June 1992

■ STE only games become a reality courtesy of Atari. Following a directive Sam Tramiel, Atari are all set to produce major coin op titles only for the STE. *Road Riot Four Wheel Drive* and *Steel Talons* are the titles touted to promote the machine.

■ Word begins to leak out that developers were already working on MultiTOS compatible applications despite the fact that application would not be ready until later on in the year.

■ A new power in the world of point and click graphic adventures is ushered in with the 92% *Lure Of The Temptress*. The four-way tank duel *Pacific Islands* gets 90%. **stf**

Steve Carey (Editor *STF* 5-19. Now publisher of *Edge, PC Gamer, Amiga Format, Amiga Power and Amiga Shopper*) :
"My favourite memory from ST FORMAT? Watching Big George recording the signature tune for Have I Got News For You on an ST. Seven series later, the ST's still booming out across the nation's TVs on Friday evenings... Oh, and big ST fan Captain Sensible still has me on his Christmas card list. Cheers, Captain!"

THAT WAS THEN

Next month we bring the Atari and *ST FORMAT* story kicking and screaming into 1994. We recall Atari's wilderness years, the launch of the Falcon030, the Jaguar and all the other great events that helped make both the mag and the machine what they are now.

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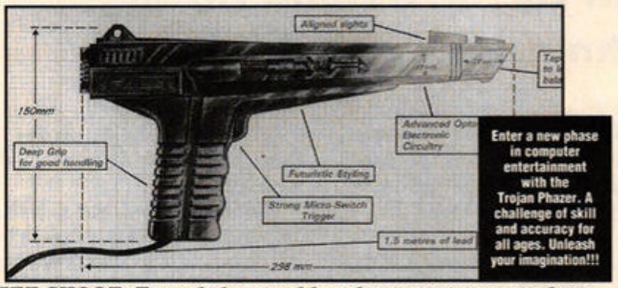

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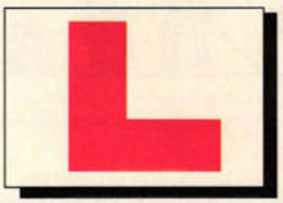

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PC720B £60
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(720K internal replacement drive)

Drive B Cable

If you have an internal drive that is not compatible with 'boot from drive B', this cable will solve your problem.

Drive-B cable.....£9.95

Blitz Turbo

Back-up disks at lightning speeds, Blitz copies from the internal to the external drive and cleverly by-passes your ST's controller chip. In around 40 seconds you can back-up an ST disk, what's more you can switch between your disk drive and Blitz Turbo without disconnecting your Blitz interface. (1988 Copyright act applies)

Blitz Turbo.....£25

Power Scanner

The award winning scanner from Power Computing allows you to scan up to 400DPI in real-time greyscale, with autoscan rate detect. The scanning software included allows you to edit and manipulate any image you scan.

Power Scanner.....£99
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Use with Ultimate Ripper or SuperMon. Stop games or programs in their tracks, search for infinate lives and hack with code. A press of the key and the program is restarted.

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Full Haynes AT command set supported
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Calcom v.32bis.....£169
Includes modem software

SuperMon

SuperMon comes with all the features of the 'Ultimate Ripper' and more. Some of the features included with SuperMon are: Program switcher- allows to programs to be in the memory simultaneously and switched between at the touch of a key, Printer spooler- allows files to be printed at the same time as other tasks, Comprehensive debugger- disassemble programs and step through them, intercept OS calls, search memory or find where a routine is called from automatically, Diagnostics function- check the internal functioning of your ST disk analyser, custom format disks, read/write sectors, hide files, Utilities- the SuperMon also has many utility functions available, including reset proof RAM disk, mouse trap function, time display, screen snapshot and 50/60Hz toggle.

Ultimate Ripper £25
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ST ANSWERS

Clive Parker takes you on a romp through this month's technical quagmire

International rescue

SOFTWARE

Please can you tell me how to send $20 to the USA safely because I want to register some Shareware programs that I got from your BBS and the Superboot program from one of your old Cover Disks. I don't want to send cash and sending a banker's draft is too expensive, it costs more than the Shareware fee! Do you have any ideas?
Paul Finch via *ST FORMAT* BBS

ST FORMAT £25 WINNER

A *It's not that difficult to send payments to the USA. All you have to do is go to any American Express office and ask for an International Money Order (IMO) for $20. You need to know the name of the person or company you are sending the payment to because it has to be written on the IMO in the American Express office. You then add your own name and address and pay the $20 at the current exchange rate, American Express charge £2 commission on an IMO.*

So for your $20 dollar payment you end up paying £13.77 plus £2 commission, a total of £15.77. We order loads of stuff from the USA using IMOs and have never had any problems. If the IMO should go astray or stolen then American Express offer a full claim and refund service. One point to remember; if you are ordering goods from the USA you may have to pay import duty when it arrives.

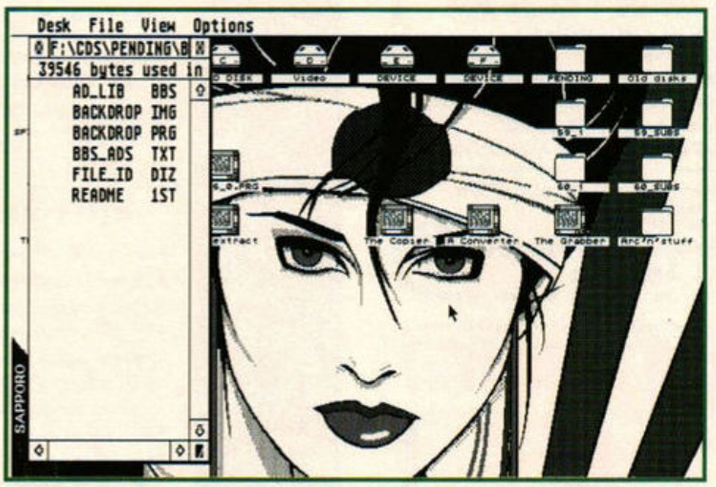
Background information

SOFTWARE

Is there any way to replace my plain Desktop with a picture file or a fill pattern? I have used *DeskFX* from Subscriber's Disk 56 but the screen updates are slow and I can't stop the cursor and font files from changing.
David Wimbush, Crawley

A *The easiest way to stop the font and mouse cursor files to stop loading is to delete them from your boot disk. Delete the files DESKFX.FON and DESKFX.MOU and re-boot, both the mouse cursor and fonts are ignored and just your background is loaded. If you are using a high resolution setup you can use the Backdrop program on this month's Cover Disk.*

All you have to do is double-click on the BACKDROP.PRG and any GEM Image file called BACKDRO.IMG in the same directory is loaded.



Yes, you to can have a nice girlie backdrop like this on your Desktop, or it you're a girl you can have a gorgeous hunky bloke to stare at. This backdrop was made using *Sebra* on a colour monitor.

Scanner Compatibility

FALCON

I have an AlfaData hand scanner that I use with my STE. I am getting a Falcon030, does the Falcon have the same cartridge slot as the STE?
Adam McGlue, Belgium

A *The Falcon does have the same cartridge port connections as the STE but the AlfaData scanner is not compatible with the Falcon's internal hardware, so you won't be able to use your scanner with a Falcon.*

Lead me on

HARD DRIVES

I have an external hard drive I want to use with my Falcon, it is a Reference 40 40MByte SCSI drive with ICD software. Where can I get a SCSI1 to SCSI2 lead?
Andrew Crumpton, Kidderminster

ASSEMBLY POINTERS

PROGRAMMING

Tony Wagstaff explains the correct way to pass handles and change palettes in an assembly program

Get in line

I'm using `vst_alignment` to change the alignment of `v_gtext` to the top left. However when I quit my program, the text in menus and dialog boxes isn't drawn correctly. How do I set the alignment back to its default setting?
Brian James, Hull

stf: *You don't actually need to do this . The problem with the listing included is that you inadvertently passed the wrong handle when calling `vst_alignment`. As it happens, this handle was the same as the handle for the screen workstation, when it should have been for a screen virtual workstation, a subtle but vitally important difference.*

Only one workstation can be opened for each device, a device being the screen, the printer and so on. GDOS or a variant needs to be installed if using anything other than the screen with system fonts. Since this restriction on the number of workstations exists, virtual workstations are used when two or more applications need to share a device. This is generally the case with the screen, as an application shares it with the AES (Application Environment Services), the latter drawing the menus and dialog boxes.

To open a virtual workstation, you simply call `v_opnvwk` with the handle set to the workstations handle. Since the AES opens the screen workstation, it holds the handle, but gives it to you, using `graf_handle`. For other devices use the handle returned by `v_opnwk`. `V_opnvwk` returns its own handle.

Any changes made to the VDI's attributes, such as text alignment, fill colour, and so on, using the virtual workstation's handle, only affects calls for that virtual workstation. Changing the settings for the workstation itself on the other hand, affects all graphics for that device. This has two benefits.

By sticking to your own virtual workstation, you won't interfere with the AES's, as Brian did by unwittingly using the real workstation. In addition, you can open multiple virtual workstations onto the same device. Suppose you open two windows, and always use one pattern fill in one, and a different fill in the other. By using two virtual workstations, one for each window, you only need to set the fill pattern once for each window.

So, if you want to keep your screen clean, don't mix your handles.

Change of colour

How do I change the colours in the Atari's palette?
David Lean, Weymouth

stf: *The safest way is to use the VDI's `vs_color` call. First open a virtual workstation onto the screen as shown in the tutorial in issue 47 (turn to page 92 to order your copy if you missed it). The value returned in `intout + 26` gives the number of colours. Save this value then call `vq_extnd` with `intin` set to one. If `intout + 10` contains zero and there are two colours, the screen is monochrome, if it is one and there are two or more colours, the screen is palette based. If it's zero and there are three or more colours, the screen is true colour.*

Now you know how many colours you have you can start altering them. Simply place the number of the colours you want to alter in `intin`, remember the first colour is nought, and the red, green and blue values in `intin + two`, `+ four`, and `+ six` respectively. These colour values need to be in the range zero to 1,000. Finally, call `vs_color` which has an opcode of 14.

For true colour, the value in `intout + 26` is the number of virtual pens. Changing these is exactly the same, however after a change, colours already drawn with that pen do not alter, unlike a palette.

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STOS CORNER

Frank Charlton advances over the horizon to take over the STOS column

Squash, anyone?

I have recently started using *STOS* again after a long lapse, and I notice after loading a message tells me that *STOS Squasher* is available. I can't find any documentation, so I don't know how to get it to work, or what it exactly it squashes! I can't think where I even got it from in the first place.
Stephen Stockdale, Davyhulme

stf: *STOS Squasher is a packer created specifically for STOS programmers, to crunch files like pictures, music or sprites down to a fraction of their size, and to expand them back to normal when the program ran. It wasn't sold on its own, but included as part of one of the early extensions.*

What's the best way to use it? In a word – don't! Squasher is unstable at best, and not particularly efficient at packing, either. If you want to use packed files like this then use the excellent Missing Link extension – we gave it to you on Cover Disk 51 – which handles the standard file crunchers available in the PD. See page 92 if you missed it.

Help! I need somebody!

I am really fed up with *STOS*. I've got millions of problems. Is there a number I could phone for help? Some of the problems include turning off the <CONTROL> and <C> buttons.
Owen Rogers, Gwent

stf: *There isn't an official STOS helpline, unfortunately. Your best bet if you want to learn is to follow the regular STOS features in ST FORMAT, and to look at some of the excellent disk magazines available. Best of the bunch is the STOSSER diskmag – available from all good PD libraries – which features some informative tutorials. If you're using the Compiler you can turn off the CTRL-C program interrupting by turning Break Checks to OFF in the Options Menu.*

If you write in with full details of particular problems, we'll do what we can to help.

Compiler problems

I have just purchased the *STOS Compiler* and noticed that it doesn't contain the *Compiler* extension for the Interpreter, yet the extension commands are listed in the *Compiler* manual.
Simon Trundle, Hull

stf: *Check your disk carefully – the Interpreter extension is the heart of the Compiler, so it should be there! Follow the installation procedure exactly as written in the manual, rather than trying to install the files from the Desktop. If you're still convinced the extension isn't there, it could be you have a faulty disk – try contacting the retailer you bought the Compiler package from.*

Spectrum is green

I have asked Blackwing Publishing if the Spectrum 512 pictures on the registered copy of *SpecCode* are PD, but have had no answer. Do you know where I can get PD disks full of Spectrum pictures? Also, is there a PD program to convert them to *Degas* or *Neochrome* format?
Bobby Newmark, Leicester

stf: *We couldn't get through to Blackwing either, so the safest way is to assume that the pictures aren't PD. There are lots of quality Spectrum 512 images available from PD libraries – check out our regular PD Directory listing for addresses. Alternatively, PhotoChrome 3 or 4 converts GIF into Spectrum format. The Shareware paint package Crack Art does the best job we've seen of converting the 512 colour images down to a humble 16 colours, but you need 1MByte to use it. Both programs are available from PD libraries.*

On the right track

I have the *STOS Tracker* extension to play *Soundtracker* music, but I don't have many tunes to use. Where can I get more tracker modules and *STOS Tracker* .ABK files? Can I convert *Quartet* music and samples to the MOD format to use?
Gary Bambrough, Chopwell

stf: *You can find a huge supply of Soundtracker modules from PD libraries, or available for download from Bulletin Boards if you have a modem. FloppyShop (☎ 0224 586208) have a particularly good selection. You can convert the MOD files to STOS Tracker's ABK format with the program supplied on the STOS Tracker disk. Sadly, Quartet tunes can't be converted to MOD format, although it could technically be possible. If anyone's written a conversion program, we'd love to see it!*

A *Several companies supply the lead you want, contact Lightwave on ☎ 051 630 5003, they can provide the lead for £43.36.*

Formatting problems

HARD DRIVES

I am adding my old ST external hard drive to my Falcon using the drive's SCSI connection. The drive was formatted using the ICD utilities, do I use the ICD software to re-format the drive for use with the Falcon or use the Atari HDX software supplied with the Falcon?
David Soldier, Worcs

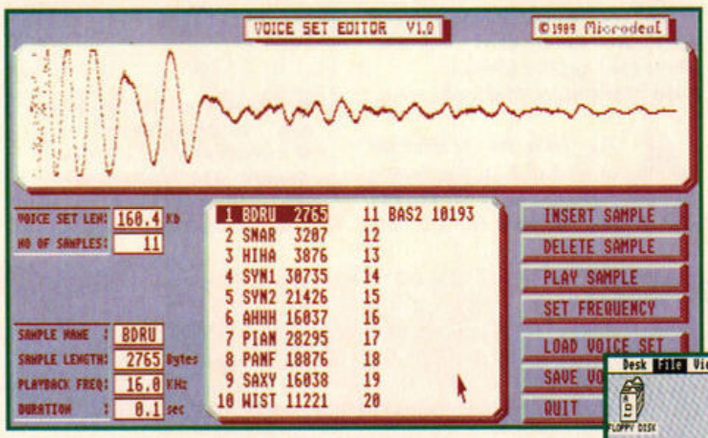
A *If the drive is already formatted then you should be able to read it straight away after booting the Falcon, the Atari driver software can detect drives formatted with ICD software. If you have problems reading the drive then use the Atari HDX software supplied with the Falcon and use the Install Devices command from the Options menu of the Falcon Desktop to locate the drive and create a drive icon. Save the Desktop and the next time you boot your Falcon the external drive appears on the Desktop.*

A small voice

DISKS

How do I load sound samples into *Quartet* on Cover Disk 58?
W Weldon, Warrington

A *You don't load the sound samples themselves into Quartet, you load a selection of sound samples into the Voices program to build up a voice set containing a maximum of 20 samples, then you save the voice set to disk. You can then load the voice set into Quartet to use in your compositions. Turn to page 90 for full details of building a voice set in our Quartet masterclass.*



You've got to use your voice! Use the Voices program to build voice sets of samples for use with *Quartet*.

Password protection

SOFTWARE

I have written a small password program using text and graphics using *Hisoft Basic* which I compiled into a program with a TOS extension. After putting it into an Auto folder I could only get a blank screen when I booted up my ST. I then changed the program to a PRG extension but it still doesn't run.
Chris Pawley, Perivale

A *Your problem is probably arising because you are using GEM objects as part of your program, any program that uses GEM – windows, icons, menus, pointer – does not run if it is in an Auto folder. This is because programs in the Auto folder run before GEM loads into memory from ROM. Write your program again without using any of the GEM library commands of Hisoft Basic.*

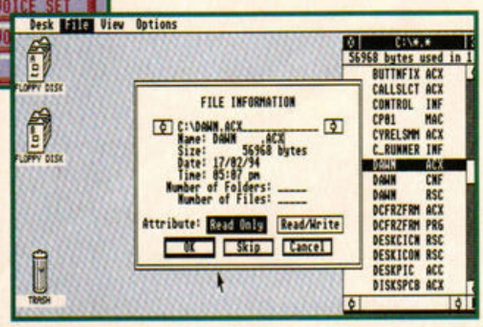
Hidden agenda

DISKS

How do you hide files on disks? I need to know because my sister keeps trashing all my files.
Ed Krol, Glasgow

A *It's dead easy to hide files and safeguard them from being accidentally erased. The best thing for you to do is to make your files Read Only, this prevents them from being erased either by mistake or being overwritten by new versions with the same name.*

Go to the Desktop and single-click on the file you wish to protect. Now go to the File menu and select



OK, here we are at the File Information dialog box. Click on the Read Only button in the Attribute line to prevent your files from being erased. Turn to page 94 to learn more about file management in part two of our series on using the ST.

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GFA WORKSHOP

Mac Marsden peeks and pokes his way around your GFA Basic problems

Mouse hole

I am just learning *GFA Basic* and I would like to monitor the position of the mouse and whether the mouse buttons have been pressed, if you could sort my problems out I would be most grateful.
Robert Golden, Durham City

stf: *The listing below will sort you out, Mousex = x position of the mouse, Mousey = y position of the mouse. Mousek = 1 = Left button, =2 Right button, =3 both buttons.*

```
Do
    Print At(1,23);"x position >";Mousex;" y
position >";Mousey
    Plot Mousex,Mousey
    A$="Press both buttons to end"
    If Mousek=1
    A$="Left hand button pressed "
    Endif
    If Mousek=2
    A$="Right hand button pressed"
    Endif
    Print At(1,1);A$
Loop until Mousek=3
Cls
```

Directory enquiries

Could you please solve a problem that has been evading me for some time now, is there anyway using *GFA Basic* in which I can create and remove a directory folder?
Margaret Whyte, West Lothian

stf: *The commands you have been looking for are MKDIR and RMDIR. To make a directory use:*

```
MKDIR "a:\FORMAT"
```

This creates a directory on drive A called FORMAT. To remove this directory use the command:

```
RMDIR "a:\FORMAT"
```

If you wished to create a directory called MAC within a directory called FORMAT, then the directory FORMAT must already exist, otherwise an error occurs.

Random Saver

I would like to place some kind of screen saver within a program I am writing, possibly have the name of the program and my name appearing randomly on the screen in a box until either a keypress or mouse click has been detected. Could you please put me on the right track?
Martyn McClean, Leeds

stf: *The listing below might give you a few ideas, but remember that before calling the routine you must include a command to save your current screen so once a keypress or mouse click has been detected your screen can be re-set to its original state. The SGET and SPUT commands would do the trick.*

If you were to remove the RANDOM commands and replace them with variable x,y co-ordinates, then you would be able to program the routine to BOUNCE around the screen.

the Show Information command, a dialog box appears with details of the file such as its name, size and date it was created. There are two buttons near the bottom of the box labelled Read Only and Read/Write, click on the Read Only button so it becomes highlighted and then click on OK. Now it is impossible to erase the file.

Blurry display

I have bought a second-hand SM124 high res monitor, the only problem is that the picture is a bit blurry in the centre of the screen. There are no external controls on the monitor to make any adjustments to the focus; are there controls inside the case I can adjust or does it need to be done by an expert?
David Woodley, Okehampton

A *There are controls inside the SM124 to adjust the display but you should not attempt to do this yourself. Monitors retain very high voltages when switched off, it's easy to electrocute yourself if you are not exactly sure of what you are doing. Any TV or computer engineer can adjust the focus of your monitor, they know where to put their fingers without getting zapped.*

CD-ROM drives

I was very interested in your review of the Gemini Atari CD-ROM in *STF* 58 but I am a bit sceptical about buying a CD-ROM drive just to use a single disc of software. Once I have connected a CD-ROM drive to the ST using the Link or a similar device, can I use any other kind of CD-ROM disc or can I only read GEM-based files? If there are other disks available, where can I get them from?
Roye Albrighton, Stafford

A *No, you're not just restricted to reading GEM files from a CD-ROM connected to an ST. You can read information from any CD-ROM*

CD-ROM for the ST, the Gemini Atari CD-ROM contains thousands of ST files in over 600MBytes of disc space. But has it arrived too late?

MUSIC AND MIDI

Andy Curtis sorts out velocity problems and offers practical advice on buying MIDI leads

Do they work?

I am expanding my MIDI setup and I shall be needing a few new MIDI cables. I resent the high prices charged by music companies and shops for these simple things and I think I may have found a way round it. I have a friend who has a box full of old fashioned 5-Pin DIN audio leads. They look just the same as MIDI leads, do you think they will work?
Sharon Robertson, Norwich

stf: *Looks can be deceptive, Sharon. We really cannot say whether the leads in question are compatible, if they are standard audio leads then they probably won't work. Proper MIDI leads are significantly different from DIN leads in the number of wires that are connected and how they are connected – MIDI leads are also usually better quality than a standard audio DIN lead. If you don't want the continual worry that your leads have failed or are unsuitable for the job we strongly recommend that you go out and get some brand new ones. If you shop around a little there are some good buys to be found. In the long run you'll be glad you did.*

Cheap speakers

I have an Atari STE 1040 and I'm after some speakers. I saw some cheap powered speakers but I think they are for PCs. Is it possible to them with my ST?
Mike Smith, Tynemouth

stf: *On the back of your STE are two phono outlets for the left and right stereo output. Simply plug the powered monitors into each of these sockets and away you go. If the lead is not supplied with the speakers it's easy to purchase or make. If you are still unsure, ask the salesman to demonstrate how to plug them in.*

Score draw

I am considering which Atari sequencer to buy. I am using *Sequencer One Plus* but I want to move on to something a bit bigger, either *Notator* or *Cubase*. I hear conflicting stories about both programs. It is important to have good score facilities on the sequencer that I choose? What do you suggest?
Martin Cain, Exeter

stf: *Both Notator and Cubase in their current versions have excellent score notation systems. Those who rely heavily on scores tend to use Notator rather than Cubase. Having said this, the current version of Cubase has some superb score editing features. Ultimately you must decide. Try to look at the rest of the program as well and see how easily you learn how to use it. All*

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```
SGET screen$
ATEXT 34,5,1,"ST FORMAT"
ATEXT 2,14,1,"COMPUTER MAGAZINE"
BOX 1,1,140,25
GET 1,1,140,25,a$
DO
    PUT RANDOM(500),RANDOM(375),a$
LOOP UNTIL INKEY$<>"" OR MOUSEK
SPUT screen$
```

Window wonders

I can open a window but can't find the commands to enable me to have two lines of text outside the main area of the window.

It's dead easy to put text on window bars with *GFA Basic*.

I would like to place my program title on one line and have menu options on the other line, please can you help?
Frederick Edge, Exeter

stf: *The two commands are TITLEW and INFOW; where TITLE #1," " enables you to give a title to the window & INFOW #1," " enables you to write an information line. Here's an example listing below.*

```
TITLEW #1,"ST FORMAT "
INFOW #1," THE BEST COMPUTER MAGAZINE"
OPENW #1,20,20,300,200,&X111111111111
PRINT "YOUR PROGRAM TEXT HERE."
PRINT "PRESS ANY KEY TO EXIT"
~INP(2)
CLOSEW #1
```

Funny maths?

Having just discovered the joy of computing, I took it upon myself to try and learn a language. *GFA Basic* was recommended and after buying the program I was given a few .GFA listings. The problem arose when I came across BIN$, OCT$ and HEX$. I know they are commands for manipulating numbers, but what numbers?
Brian Orr, Alloa

stf: *In our daily life the numbering system we use is Denary or Decimal (to the base 10). These commands BIN$, OCT$ and HEX$ work to the base 2,8 and 16 respectively. For example, if we take the decimal number 35 and convert it, in Binary (BIN$) it would be 100011, in Octal (OCT$) it would be 43 and in Hexadecimal (HEX$) it would be 23. These figures are worked out as follows:*

```
BIN$ 100011 = (1*32)+(1*2)+(1*1) = 35
OCT$ 43 = (4*8)+3 = 35
HEX$ 23 = (2*16)+3 = 35
```

In the Hexadecimal system the numbers are always in groups of two, so the number 1 would be 01. The numbers 10 to 15 are represented by letters (normally uppercase) A=10, B=11, C=12, D=13, E=14 and F=15. Remember your ST counts from zero and not from one.

disc using the ISO9660 High Sierra format, this includes disks containing picture files, text files and MIDI music files – some discs available contain nothing but this kind of file. All these types of data files are not machine specific and can be accessed by any computer with a CD-ROM drive. One point to remember is that many CD-ROM discs are machine specific and contain software that only runs on a PC clone or an Apple Macintosh. While you may be able to copy software from a PC or Mac CD-ROM disc, you cannot run it on your ST.

Contact Unica on ☎ 061 429 0241 and ask for a catalogue of their CD-ROM collection, all discs listed state whether they contain machine specific software for general data files. There are at least two more ST CD-ROM discs being compiled.

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STFM to STE

HARDWARE

An advert for First Computer Centre in *ST FORMAT* lists STE motherboards in the Atari Spares section. Is it possible to upgrade my STFM to an STE just by swapping the boards?
Jamie Smith, Shetland

A *It is possible to use the STE motherboard with all the other parts of your STFM to make an STE, the only problem is that you have to cut holes in the STFM case for the extra ports on the STE motherboard. These include the analog joystick ports and the phono connectors for the stereo audio output – you could buy an STE case instead. You would also have to buy some memory for the board, you can get four 256K SIMMs for about £20 to give you 1MByte of RAM. The STE motherboard costs £49.99, the STE case costs £24.99 and 1MByte of RAM costs £20, so your upgrade to a 1MByte STE using the disk drive, power supply and keyboard from your STFM is going to cost you around £95. Phone First Computer Centre on ☎ 0523 319444 to check the availability of all spares.*

ST, what's that then?

What do the letters ST in the STE and STFM name actually stand for?
Scott Tracy, London

A *It has often been reported that the letters ST were the initials of Sam Tramiel, they are but that's not the reason the computer got the name. The letters ST refers to the architecture of the 68000 Motorola microprocessor chip that controls the ST, ST stands for Sixteen Thirtytwo. The 68000 has a 16-bit address and data bus externally and uses 32-bit buses internally for data processing, while the TT uses 32-bit internal and 32-bit external addressing – hence the name TT.*

Interior designs

HARD DRIVES

Is there a simple plug-in internal hard drive I can install in my STE for under £200? If not, what's the best external drive for around the same price?
Paul Harman, Rickmansworth

A *There are no internal hard drives for the STE at all, let alone a simple plug-in version. You can get an external 127MByte ST hard drive for £269 from Gasteiner on ☎ 081 345 600, please ring before ordering to check availability.*

Outer limits

Is there any upper limit on hard drive capacity for the STE, can I use a 245MByte Quantum drive? I have heard that there is a limit of 16MBytes per partition.
Rob Stirling, Kent

A *GEM is usually restricted to 16MByte partition sizes, but clever programming techniques enable formatting software to use BGM partitions enabling a maximum 512MBytes in a partition. Almost all formatting software for the ST can create BGM partitions, ICD and Atari HDX certainly can. One of our hard drives is split into four 128MByte partitions and runs without problems.*

good music shops give you ample opportunity to try out the different packages thoroughly before buying. When you are spending such a large amount of money it is the least they can do!

Even velocities

Is there a way to stop the ST from recognising velocity input from a mother keyboard? I often want to enter drum parts that use the same velocity and I cannot make my sequencer ignore it. Perhaps there is a PD program to do this?
Keith Herron, Blyth

stf: *We cannot give you a specific answer here, Keith, as you haven't told us which sequencer package you are using. There is nearly always an option to enable you to get the results you are after, either as an input filter or an edit page after data has been input. Look for input filters for the channel you are using or a complete input filter page. Otherwise look for a page in your sequencer program that enables you to work on a specific block of data and transform it.*

Logical Edit would work in Cubase, Zone edit in Virtuoso and so on. There should be a way to do what you need to. Keep on looking.

Surprising changes

I use an old Korg DP80 as my mother keyboard and I was fiddling around with the internal voices the other day which completely screwed up my MIDI setup for no apparent reason.

I have now built a guard so that I don't accidentally catch one of the buttons and ruin everything again. Have you experienced any similar problems with this?
Jim Lowery, Hebdon Bridge

stf: *The problem here is that the DP80 is sending out program change data when you change its internal voices. Simply filter this out with an input filter or switch it off from the keyboard itself.*

Not loud enough

I just can't get the volume on my SM124 loud enough to hear the metronome from my sequencer program – is there any way that I can make it louder? I cannot afford any amplified speakers at the moment.
Steve Milbourn, London

stf: *Why not use a MIDI metronome click through your music setup as well? Most sequencers do this by activating the drum sounds via MIDI. The metronome is not recorded onto your music, it's just there as a guide. Try it, it can be as loud as your amplifier goes.*

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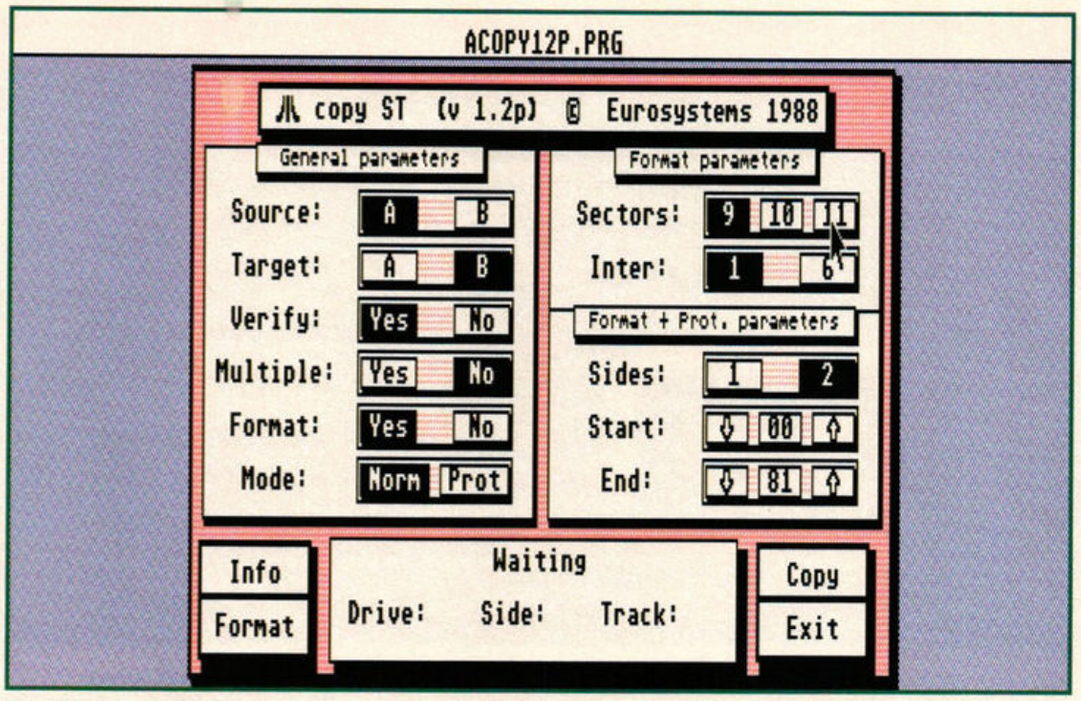
Twighlight zone

SOFTWARE

I have upgraded to an STE from an STFM and I am worried about software incompatibility, I have heard that some software doesn't run on the STE. What software doesn't run on my machine?
Richard Marks, Bury

A *You should have no problems running any software on your STE unless it is a very old game indeed. The STE has been around for a about six years now and the STFM was on sale for three years before that, so you can see that a lot more STE compatible software has been developed than STFM only software. The compatibility problem was never as bad as it was generally thought, the only problems were with games that didn't stick to Atari programming guidelines – all games since 1988 have been STE compatible.*



Yes, it's *Acopy*, a very popular disk copier for potential pirates in the late '80s. Luckily, it's no longer available.

Apple to Atari

HARDWARE

I have an old Philips Monitor 80 Type BM 7522/05G which I used with my old Apple 2 computer, it has video and audio sockets on the back. Can I use it with my ST?
Paul Cunniffe, Fife

A *It's difficult to be precise without more details of the Philips monitor, we contacted Philips and they were unable to give us any information about it. From your description is seems likely that the monitor uses composite video input so there should be no problem getting a lead made up. Contact Meedmore on ☎ 051521 2202 and give them full details of your monitor and STE, they can make you a lead if they don't have any ready made for about £15 depending on the parts needed.*

SpeedoGDOS vs NVDI

SOFTWARE

I am writing with regard to your problems using NVDI with SpeedoGDOS and *AtariWorks*, there is quite a simple solution. To ensure SpeedoGDOS works with NVDI correctly, NVDI must be run first in the Auto folder. When you configure NVDI disable the GDOS option and copy the files NVDIDRV1.SYS, NVDIDRV2.SYS, NVDIDRV3.SYS to your Speedo GDOS font folder, this enables NVDI to find its screen drivers and SpeedoGDOS to find its font files. I hope this helps your readers.
Malcolm Cooke, Australia

A *Thanks for the tip Malcolm, our NVDI/Speedo setup now works perfectly.*

Pirate copies

SOFTWARE

Where can you get the program *Acopy* for the ST, I have heard it's one of the best copiers around? Are there any other good copiers around, and I don't mean *Fastcopy Professional?*
Martin de Vos, The Netherlands

A *Hmmm, Acopy used to be very popular because it could copy protected games disks before the manufacturers changed their protection methods. The last version of Acopy was released in 1988, since then it seems to have dropped out of sight. There really is no other program about that's better than Fastcopy Professional for copying and formatting standard disks.*

Why do you want Acopy anyway, surely you don't want to copy protected software?

Pounding around

PRINTERS

I am having a spot of trouble getting *First Word Plus* to print a pound sign whenever I write letters, yet when I do a test printout of the printer it prints the pound sign without any problems. Please can you tell me how can I get it to print out?
Stephen Pike, Norwich

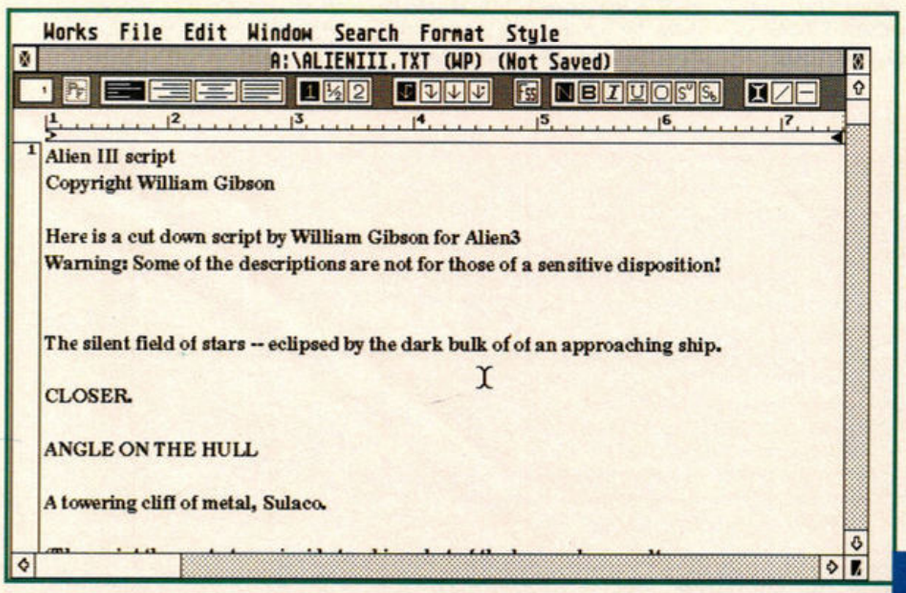
A *There's a simple solution to your problem with the pound sign, use a hash symbol (#) instead of the pound sign in your documents and it should print out OK. Another way around the problem is to take a look at your printer manual and find out how to set the DIP switches to the UK character set – you didn't mention which printer you have so we can't really give you any more to go on than that.*

Any port in a storm

HARDWARE

Is it possible to swap the analog joystick ports and the standard joystick ports on an STE? If so, would it be a simple job for me to do?
Matthew Wilson, Edgware

A *It is possible to rewire the ports on your STE so the analog and standard joystick sockets are switched, but it would be a very complex job. This is because the analog sockets are mounted directly on the motherboard of the ST, so to move them you would have to de-solder them and then solder 30 individual cables to their connections. It's not really worth the effort. Why not move the joystick ports to the back of the STE's case like we did in the DIY project in issue 57 of ST FORMAT? Turn to page 92 to order a copy if you missed it.*



Our invisible fonts problem has vanished itself thanks to a great tip from one of our Antipodean readers.

Send your ST related problems to ST Answers, *ST FORMAT*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW. Please indicate the type of problem on the envelope.

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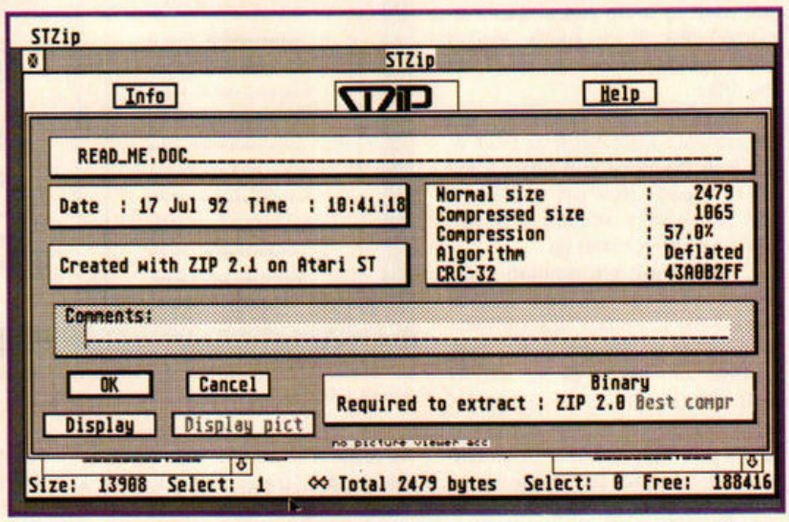
GETTING UNZIPPED

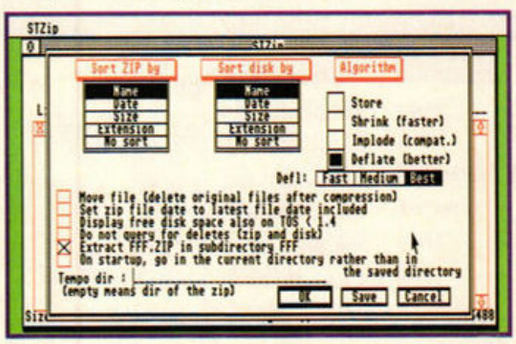
There's a small mountain of letters from readers unable to unZIP files on a single disk drive system, Clive Parker shows you what to do

Using *STZIP* is dead easy if you have an external disk drive or loads of extra memory to create RAM disks, though it's not quite so easy to get to grips with if you have a single drive setup.

The problem lies with having the single drive, it's a pain to copy each ZIP file individually to a blank disk just to decompress it, it would be much easier to decompress files directly from the original disks. Well, you can do just that, all you have to do is fool the ST into thinking that you are unpacking the programs to drive B – even though you've only got a single drive.



If you double-click on any file in any file window you can get information about that file, if it's a text file you can even read it directly from the ZIP.



Selecting the Configuration button from the main ZIP menu enables you to set up the preferences of *STZIP*. You can select the compression method and speed and set up various disk and file options, you can also specify if you want the ZIP file expanded into a folder.

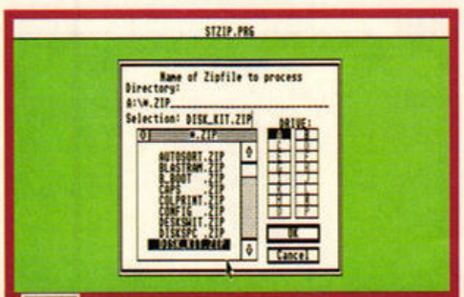
Tomfoolery

Because of the way the ST's operating system is designed you can always use a virtual drive B even when there is only a single drive connected, this isn't just true of *STZIP* and the Desktop – you can do it from within any program. It's almost the same method as opening the floppy drive B icon on the Desktop to copy files from one disk to another, the only difference here is that you are selecting drive B from within a program rather than from the Desktop. To unpack your ZIPped files – we've used the ones from the 100 great PD programs offer for our demonstration – all

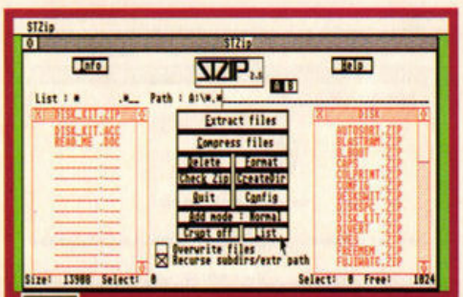
What's it for then?

The original reason for the development of archivers was to make data transfers over the telephone system faster and more economical, obviously it costs less to transfer a 100K file than a 200K file. Another advantage is that different files can be compressed into a single data file, so you only have to locate a single filename to download a complete piece of software from a BBS. PD libraries picked up on archivers for software distribution, it means they can pack more software onto a single disk. We also use LZH archiving to generate our self-extracting files for the Cover Disk when we have too much software to cram onto a single disk. This means that we can give you more software with every Cover Disk.

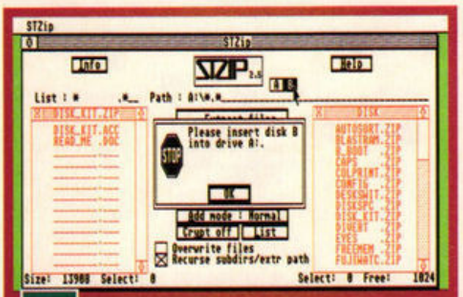
Unpacking that ZIP: You'll need a blank formatted disk marked disk B



1 Load up *STZIP 2* on your ST and wait until the file selector box appears. Take the *STZIP* program disk out of the drive and put the disk containing the ZIP file you want to unpack in the drive. Click on the X gadget in the top left corner of the file window to re-read the drive, select the file to unpack and click on OK.



2 After a few seconds the main *STZIP* window appears with the contents of the ZIP file displayed in the window on the left and the contents of drive A in the Disk window on the left. This is version 2.5 here, but all versions of *STZIP 2* look pretty much the same with only a few minor cosmetic differences.



3 If you look above the Disk window you'll notice two small buttons just next to the *STZIP* logo marked A and B. The highlighted button shows the currently selected disk drive whose contents are displayed in the disk window below, now click on the B button. An alert box pops up telling you to put disk B in drive A.

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Postcardware

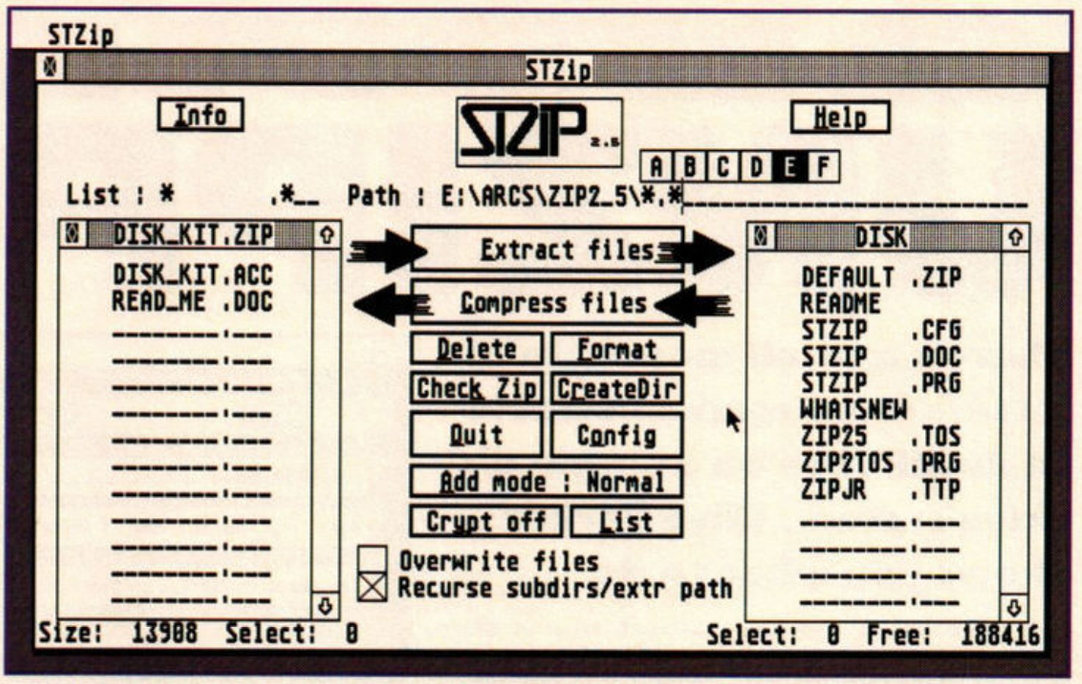
All versions of *STZIP 2* are Postcardware, that means that the author of the program would like you to send him a picture postcard if you like *STZIP 2* and use it on a regular basis. Now, that sounds like a bargain, doesn't it?

you need is a disk with a version of *STZIP*, a disk containing the files you want to unzip and a blank formatted disk. Once you've loaded *STZIP* you can remove the disk from the drive.

Get the disk containing the ZIPped files and label it as DISK A, put it in the drive and select a ZIP file to unpack. Now get your blank disk and label it as DISK B so you don't get them mixed up.

When you are running *STZIP* from drive A and you have selected the ZIP file to unpack, the contents of drive A are shown in the Disk window on the right of *STZIP's* main screen. All you have to do is select the drive B button at the top of the screen by the *STZIP* logo and your ST tells you to "Please insert disk B into drive A." All you need to do is put a blank disk into the drive and your ST treats it as if it were a separate logical drive.

For full details of unpacking your ZIP files take a look at the illustrated step-by-step guide below, once you've unpacked one file you can unpack them all, even if they're from an IBM PC. ***stf***



STZIP in all its glory. The file window on the left displays the files in the ZIP while the file window on the right displays the contents of the current disk.

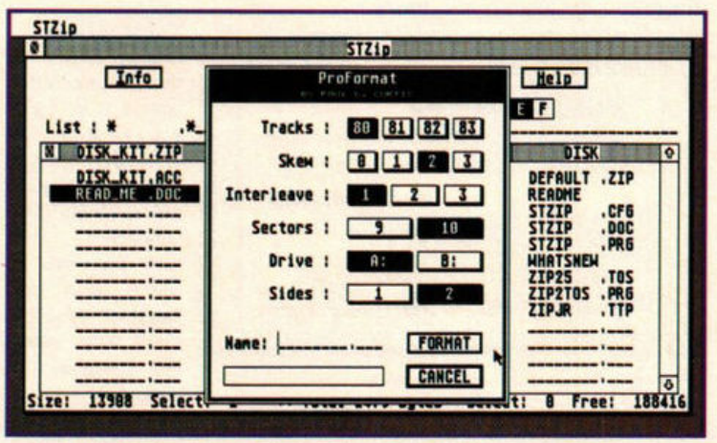
ARC, *ZIP* and the rest of the ZOO

There so many different types of archiver over the different operating systems that it's almost impossible to catalogue them all here. The reason different archivers appear is that ever more efficient compression algorithms are developed as time goes by.

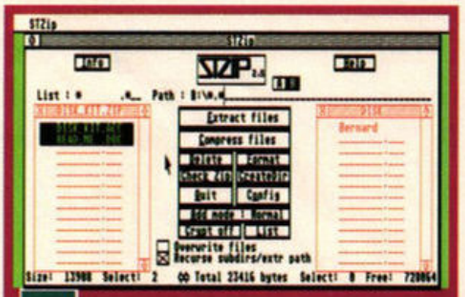
The original compression method used on the ST is ARC, this was developed on the PC and was quickly adopted by the ST community, it gave a reasonable compression ratio and was supplied with various shell programs making it easier to use. Next came LH5 compression, now referred to as LZH compression. This offered greater compression ratios than ARC and has all but superseded it on the ST, LZH has never been popular on the PC.

PKZIP for the ST is the core code that *ZIP* on the ST is based upon, ZIP offers excellent compression ratios when compared to ARC and LZH and has almost become the standard compression method on the ST and PC. LZH is constantly being improved and is now nearly as efficient as *ZIP*.

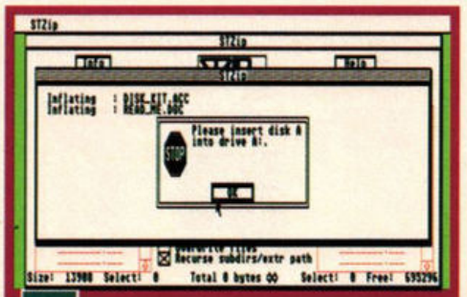
Other compression methods used on the ST are ARJ and ZOO from the PC, these have never been greatly supported on the ST.



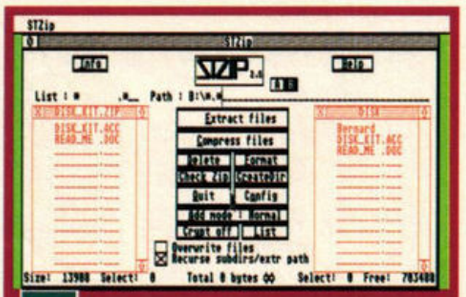
Don't worry if you get stuck without a blank formatted disk, *STZIP* has a formatting program built-in to get you out of trouble.



4 Put your blank disk in the drive and click on OK, the new disk is read and the contents displayed in the Disk window as drive B. Now select the files you wish to decompress in the *ZIP* window, just click on them once to highlight them. When you have selected your files select the Extract File option.



5 The program flips to the information screen, follow the on-screen prompts and swap disks whenever the message appears in the alert box. But remember that your disk of ZIPped files is disk A and your blank disk is disk B, if you get them mixed up you'll cause an error and you'll have to start all over again.



6 After the requisite number of disk swaps - two for every file extracted - you are returned to the main menu of *STZIP*. You can now select another ZIP file and decompress more files to your blank disk or exit to the Desktop. Have a practice decompacting a few files until you are used to using *STZIP*.

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MOUSE-KA-

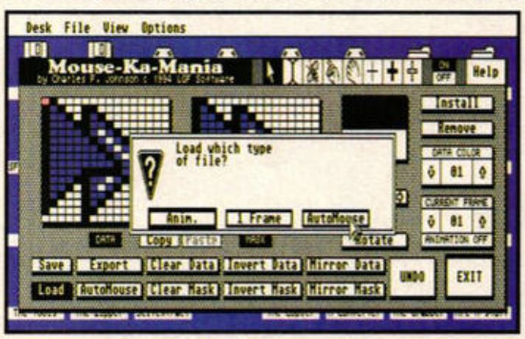
Last month we gave you *Mouse-Ka-Mania 2*, enabling you to create animated mouse cursors for use in any program. Clive Parker explains how to use *MKM*

Now you can get rid of that annoyingly boring "busy bee" cursor that appears when your ST is loading or saving data and replace it with an animated watch, clock or a hand counting up to five on its fingers.

How? Using *Mouse-Ka-Mania 2 (MKM)* from *ST FORMAT* Cover Disk 59 – turn to page 92 to order a copy if you missed it – you can design and install your own mouse cursors or use some of the 148 static and animated designs supplied on the Cover Disk.

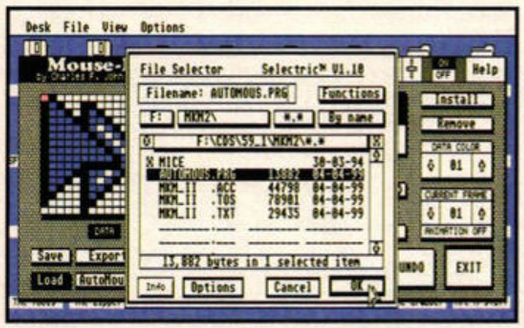
Getting under way

Mouse-Ka-Mania 2 is supplied as a Desk Accessory so you must copy the MOUSEKA.ACC file to the root directory of your boot disk to install it. Reset your ST with the disk in the drive to load *MKM* into memory. You can now access the main *MKM* screen by selecting the *Mouse-Ka-Mania 2* command from the Desk menu at the Desktop.



When you select the Load button in *MKM*, you are given a choice of file types to load. You can load a single-frame cursor or an animated cursor into the current cursor being edited or load a complete set of cursors by selecting AutoMouse.

The Desk Accessory is used for creating and editing your new mouse cursors, assigning them to system mouse cursors and loading and saving single frame cursors, animated cursors and AutoMouse cursor sets. Select the Desk Accessory and the main screen of the program appears. In the title bar of the menu there is a display of the eight system mouse cursors, the one that is highlighted is the current cursor being edited. To get started click on the Load button at the bottom left of the screen, an alert box appears with three buttons labelled Anim, 1 Frame and AutoMouse. Select the AutoMouse button and wait for the file selector to appear, now select the AUTOMOUS.PRG on your *MKM* disk.



After selecting the AutoMouse option to load the file selector appears, now select the AUTOMOUS.PRG file and load it. AutoMouse is a small program about 14K in length you put in your Auto folder to load a new set of cursors into memory whenever you boot-up your ST.

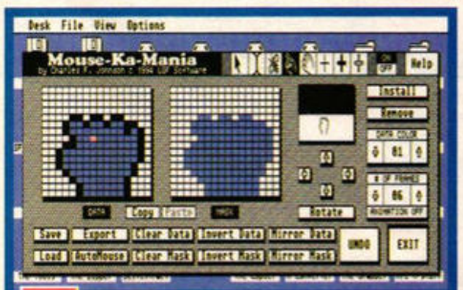
The AutoMouse program is a small utility that contains the data for eight replacement mouse cursors and the code to load them into memory so your ST can use them instead of the system cursors. The size of the AutoMouse program can vary depending on whether you are using single frame or animated mouse cursors, and also depends on the number of frames of animation used – there is a maximum of 32 frames for each animated cursor.

When the AutoMouse file has loaded you can see that your normal arrow mouse cursor has

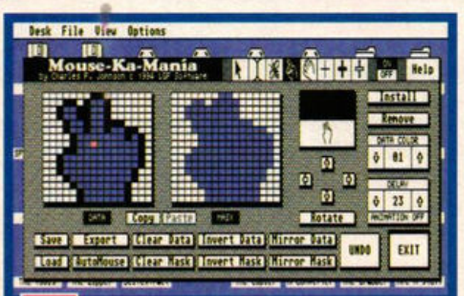
REGISTER THAT SOFTWARE

If you are using *Mouse-Ka-Mania 2* on a regular basis then you really should register it with the author at this address: Charles F Johnson, PO Box 1250, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272 USA. The best way to send money to the USA is to use an International Money Order (IMO) from American Express, a $15 dollar IMO only costs around £12.50 including commission, full details on how to get IMOs are in ST Answers on page 80.

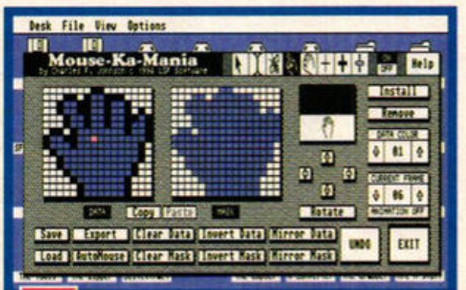
BUILD AN ANIMATED MOUSE CURSOR IN THREE EASY STEPS



1 First of all it's a good idea to work out roughly what you want to achieve on paper - the design of the first frame, the last frame and the number of frames in between. This hand with counting fingers has six frames starting with no fingers extended and ending with all extended.



2 This is the third frame of the sequence with two fingers extended, for each extra frame you just add another finger. Clicking the bar at the top of the animation control box enables you to switch between Current Frame, Number of Frames and Delay all controlled by the arrows.



3 You can adjust the speed of the animation using the Delay option - the higher the number, the slower the speed of the animation. This is the sixth frame of the animation, there are a maximum of 32 frames permitted in *Mouse-Ka-Mania 2* enabling longer animations.

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MANIA 2

MOUSE-MUNGOUS: FIND YOUR WAY AROUND *MOUSE-KA-MANIA*

1 The eight system mouse cursors, the highlighted cursor is being edited.

2 On/Off: Enables you to see how the current mouse cursor looks.

3 Help: Displays the six page on-line help feature.

4 Data window: Edit the data information of the mouse cursor in this window.

5 Mask window: Edit the mask information.

6 Display area: Move the mouse over here to see what the new cursor looks like.

7 Install: Activates the currently edited cursor in the AutoMouse screen.

8 Remove: Deactivates the cursor being edited in the AutoMouse screen.

9 Data and Mask colour: Select colours for your data and mask.

10 Scroll: Move the data and mask info around the editing windows.

11 Frame/Animation: Select frame and toggle animation modes and speed.

12 Save: Save animation or single frame mouse cursor data to disk.

13 Export: Save cursor data in C, Assembler code or as BASIC data statements.

14 Copy and Paste: Copy one set of cursors data to another cursor.

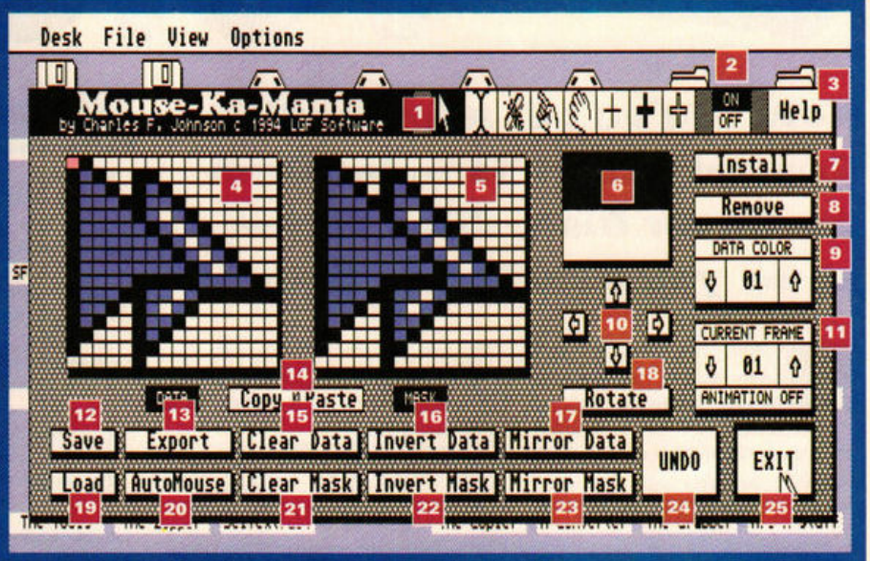
15 Clear Data: Erase all information from the Data window.

16 Invert Data: Toggles all pixels in the Data window.

17 Mirror Data: Vertically mirrors all information in the Data window.

18 Rotate: Rotate data and mask windows clockwise by 90 degrees.

19 Load: Load single frame, animated or complete cursor sets from disk.



Mouse-Ka-Mania is a simple point-and-click program enabling you to create, edit and modify the eight system mouse cursors used by your ST.

20 AutoMouse: Go to the AutoMouse screen.

21 Clear Mask: This erases all the information from the Mask window.

22 Invert Mask: Reverses the colour of all pixels in the Mask window.

23 Mirror Mask: Vertically mirrors all information in the Mask window.

24 Undo: Cancels the last operation performed.

25 Exit: Leave the *Mouse-Ka-Mania* editor and return to the Desktop.

changed into a flashing arrow. To see the other shapes installed select the different system cursors from the selection bar at the top of the screen and move the mouse cursor over the black and white viewing area, you can then watch the animations running. To stop an animation click on the bar marked Animation On in the box just above the Exit button.

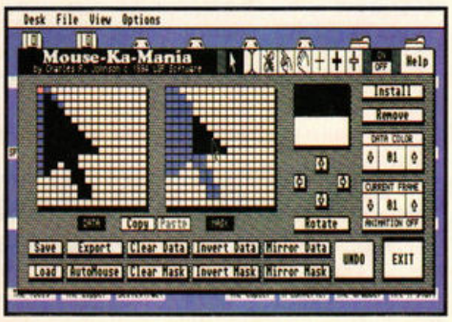
Editing and saving

There are 148 different mouse cursors to experiment with split into 74 single frame and 74 animated designs to choose from. You can either load a design from disk or create a new cursor from scratch. All you have to do is click on an empty pixel in the grid with the left mouse button to set it or click on a set pixel with the right mouse button to clear it. This works for both the Data and Mask grids, clicking on a pixel in the Data grid with both mouse buttons together sets the hot point of the cursor, this is the point in a cursor that GEM detects when a mouse click is performed to select something.

The Mask data is used to provide an outline of the cursor so you can see it when it is moved over an area of the screen that is the same colour as the cursor, Mask data is usually one pixel larger than the cursor data enabling the cursor to remains the same size.

You save mouse data using the Save button, if you are saving an animation file the *.MKM* file extension is used while a single frame uses the .DAT file extension. This is handy if you want to build up a library of mouse cursors or build different AutoMouse files. If you are a programmer and want to incorporate your mouse designs in your software then you can use the Export button to save the data as C, Assembler or BASIC source code.

It's easy, get designing and send in your designs and we'll put the best ones on the Cover Disk. Fame at last! ***stf***



When you select the Load button, you are given a choice of file types to load. You can load a single-frame cursor or an animated cursor into the current cursor being edited or load a complete set of cursors by selecting AutoMouse.

SAVING AUTOMOUSE CURSOR PROGRAMS

It's dead easy to save a set of cursors to load automatically when you boot up your ST. When you are satisfied with a specific cursor select the Install button at the top right of the main screen. After installing all eight replacement cursors click on the AutoMouse button. This takes you to AutoMouse menu screen, here you can decide if you want to replace all the cursors or just some of them by clicking on the them. Any highlighted cursor is replaced. Select the Save option and decide on a name for the program. Copy the program into the Auto folder of your boot disk and your system cursors are replaced by the customised versions when you boot up.

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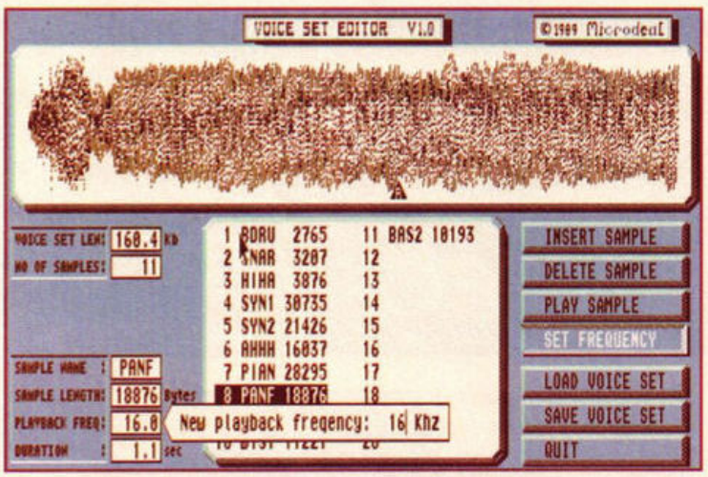
HEARING VOICES

Now you've got another 20 *Quartet* sound samples from the Cover Disk, Clive Parker show you how to use them

Before you can use any new sound samples to make songs in *Quartet* you must include them in a voice set. This is because you can't load individual samples into the main *Quartet* program, just voice sets. This means that all the sampled instrument sounds you want to use in a song must be contained in a single voice set.

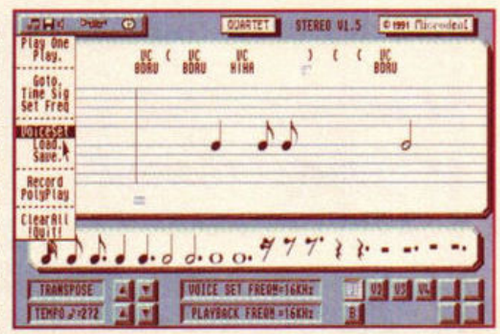
That's where the Voice Set Editor (VSE) comes in, this utility supplied on issue 57's *Quartet* Cover Disk – turn to page 92 to order a copy if you missed it – enables you to merge up to 20 AVR format sound samples into a single voice set file. You can use the editor to create completely new voice sets or to modify the existing voice sets supplied with *Quartet*, each voice set can be up to 256K long.



When you have loaded all your instrument samples into the Voice Set Editor set the sample frequency by clicking on the, er, Set Frequency button.

Any resolution

Just like the main *Quartet* editor, the VSE comes in two versions – VOICES.PRG for colour systems and VOICESM.PRG for high resolution systems. It's a good idea to use a separate work disk for editing your voice sets, copy the version of the program you are going to use to a blank disk along with your voice sets and samples.



Load your new voice set into *Quartet* by selecting the Voice Set option in the main drop down menu. Obvious really...

VOICE SET INFORMATION

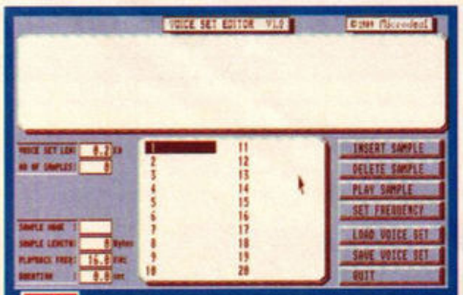
The voice set information area of the VSE displays useful data about the current voice set in the memory.

This information includes the number of samples in the voice set and the current size of the voice set file in K. Before saving a voice to disk make sure it has enough space on it for the file you are editing, the maximum size for a set is 256K.

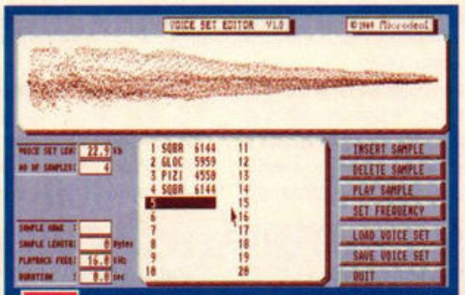
The current sample name shows the voice set name of the selected file in the main window, the first four letters of the name are displayed in the main *Quartet* editor voice menu. The length of the current sample is also shown here.

The playback frequency is displayed here – the complete voice set is saved with the same playback frequency, set it to the frequency you want to use in your *Quartet* songs. The length of the selected sample is displayed in seconds.

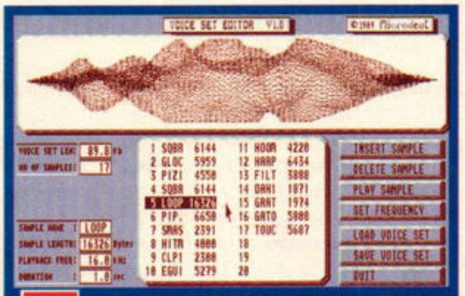
BUILDING A VOICE SET FROM AVI SAMPLES



1 Run the Voice Set Editor program and wait for it to load into memory. It's a good idea to plan out exactly what sounds you want to include before you start building a new voice set. Check out the samples using the digital program first.



2 If you are building up a voice set from scratch then do it in sections. You've got room for 20 instruments altogether - you don't have to use all 20 - load your percussion and bass instruments first, say four of each to start with.



3 Once you have loaded your beat section it's time to choose your main instruments. You've got bags of space available so you can load in a couple of pianos, a couple of organs, some techno sounds, some human voices and a pan pipe.

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Have a practice at editing a voice set, select the Load Voice Set button and wait for the file selector to appear. Select a voice set from your work disk – voice sets have a .SET file extender – and wait for it to load. The central display fills with a list of the samples contained in the set. You can play samples individually by clicking on the Play Sample button, the highlighted sample is then played. Changing the frequency enables you to alter the sound of a complete voice set.

Select a sample and click on the Delete Sample button, the sample is erased from the voice set – don't worry about wiping the voice set from the disk, only the sample in memory is affected. Delete a couple more samples from the voice set, now you have a bit of room to add some of your new samples to the set.

Inserting new samples

You can add a new instrument sound sample at any position in the voice set. Select the position where you want to insert the sample into the set – it doesn't matter if a sample is already in that position – and click on the Insert Sample button. When file selector pops up select the AVR sample you want to add to the set, the sample is loaded into memory and appears in the voice set window in the position selected. The sample originally in that position and all the other samples below it move down one position in the voice set.

Add a few more samples and build up the voice set to the maximum of 20 instruments. Once you are happy with the voice set you can save it to disk, select the Save Voice Set button and wait for the file selector. Enter the name of your voice set and make sure it has a .SET file extender, if a voice set doesn't have the correct file extender the VSE refuses to load it if you try and load it a second time.

"You can use the editor to create completely new voice sets or to modify the existing voice sets"

Do the right thing

Remember that the VSE only loads sound samples in Microdeal's own generic AVR format, if you try to load any other kind of sample the program sulks and gives you curt error messages such as "Invalid Header Error." Wild, huh? Use the *Digital* program to convert any "foreign" samples you may have, if you don't know how to use *Digital* then take a look at page 46 of *ST FORMAT* 59 – if you haven't got a copy then turn to page 92 to order a back issue.

A few hints for using the VSE, remember that you can only have a maximum of 20 samples in a voice set and the voice set can only have a maximum size of 256K. If you make it any bigger it won't load into *Quartet* correctly. Make sure all your samples are the same frequency and use the same frequency setting to save the voice set as you are going to use in *Quartet* itself.

If you are a bit worried about creating voice sets from scratch, just experiment by replacing a few instruments in an existing voice set and loading it into *Quartet* and see how it sounds. Now you know all about the three *Quartet* programs you can start making music today and make sure you keep an eye out for more *Quartet* samples on next month's Cover Disk. ***stf***

QUARTET'S VOICE SET EDITOR

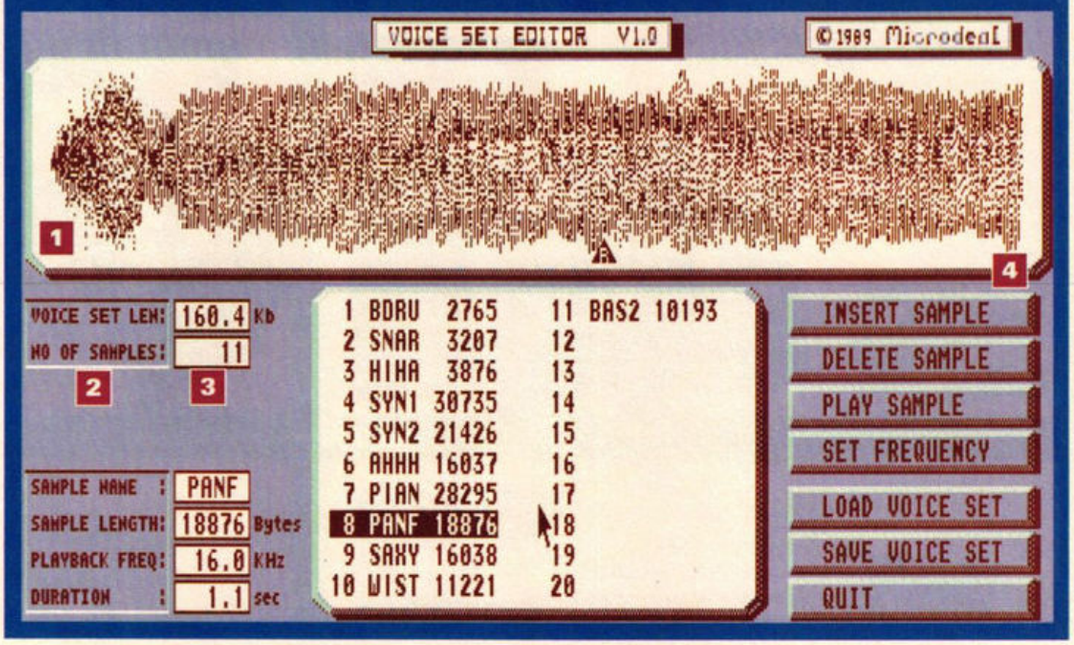
The Voice Set Editor is divided into four main areas, the main sample display, the sample list, the information windows and the file functions

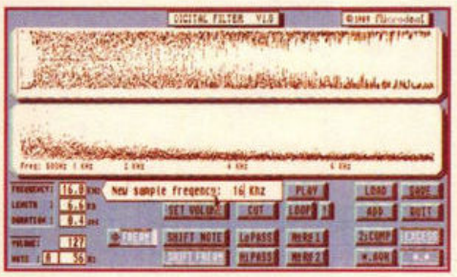
1 Sample display: The currently selected sample is displayed in this window.

2 Set info: Information about the voice set and the current sample.

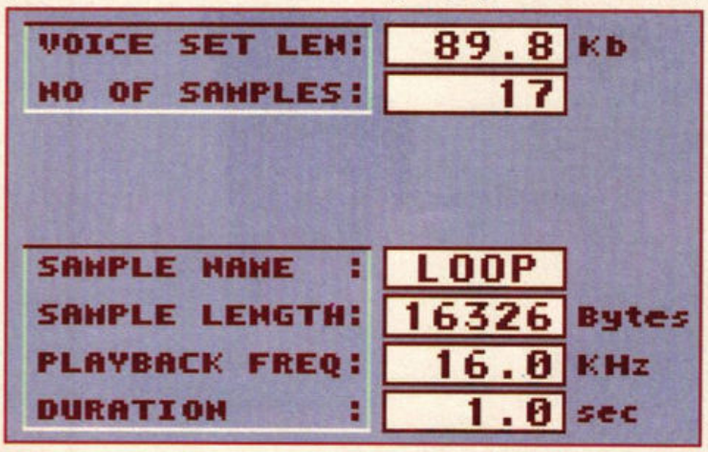
3 Voice Set window: Displays all the current samples in the voice set.

4 File options: Load and delete samples, load and save voice sets, play samples and set the voice set frequency.





Select the SHIFT FREQN button to change the sample rate of your instrument sounds, if you have a spare couple of hours you can covert all your sounds.



All the voice set information at a glance, just take a look at those finely crafted letters and numbers.

SETTING THE FREQUENCY

When you are creating voice sets for *Quartet* it's a good idea to make sure that all the samples are sampled at the same frequency, this ensures that all the instruments have the right pitch when used in a *Quartet* song.

The best way to do this is to use the *Digital* Filter program to manipulate the samples, we told you how to use it in last month's masterclass. Use the SHIFT FREQN option in the *Digital* program to resample all your instrument sounds to the same frequency – say 16KHz – and then save your samples back to disk.

Most of the samples supplied with *Quartet* are already at the same frequency anyway, but it's probably a good idea to check any samples you are going to add to a voice set before you start work on it. If you have the time check and convert all your samples, then use the same frequency in *Quartet* when creating your songs.

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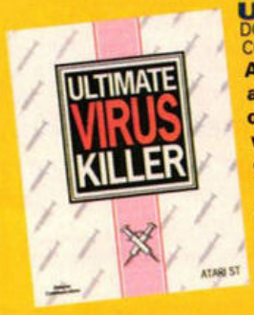

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ISSUE 58

MAY 1994
Disk: *Quartet; Cannon Fodder* demo **Inside:** Piracy – your views; DIY monitor switcher; GDOS exposed; *AVP* previewed; *DA's Picture* reviewed.

ISSUE 57

APRIL 1994
Disk: Demos of *UVK v6* and *Thought!*, plus *Tri Heli* and *Holocaust* **Inside:** direct to disk recording; *Chagall* and *Cannon Fodder* reviewed; move the ST's mouse port.

ISSUE 56

MARCH 1994
Disk: *F1* demo, children's colouring book; plus 5 utilities **Inside:** Over 100 ST tips; image processing; *Cubase Audio* review; *Goal!* review; Jag pages.

ISSUE 55

FEBRUARY 1994
Disk: *Frontier – Elite 2* demo; *Stomp; Before Dawn, DM* Editor. **Inside:** Your ST's future; *Atari-Works; Cybermorph* reviewed. 16 page Jaguar section.

ISSUE 54

JANUARY 1994
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ISSUE 50

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AUGUST 1993
Disk: *POV Raytracer* complete program and the *Chaos Engine* demo. **Inside:** Discover the power of raytracing, and take a look at MultiTOS.

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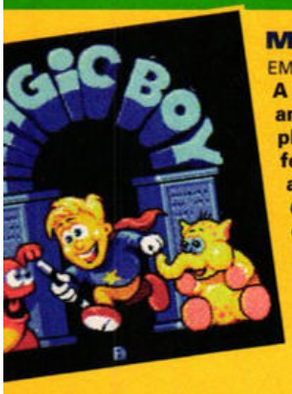

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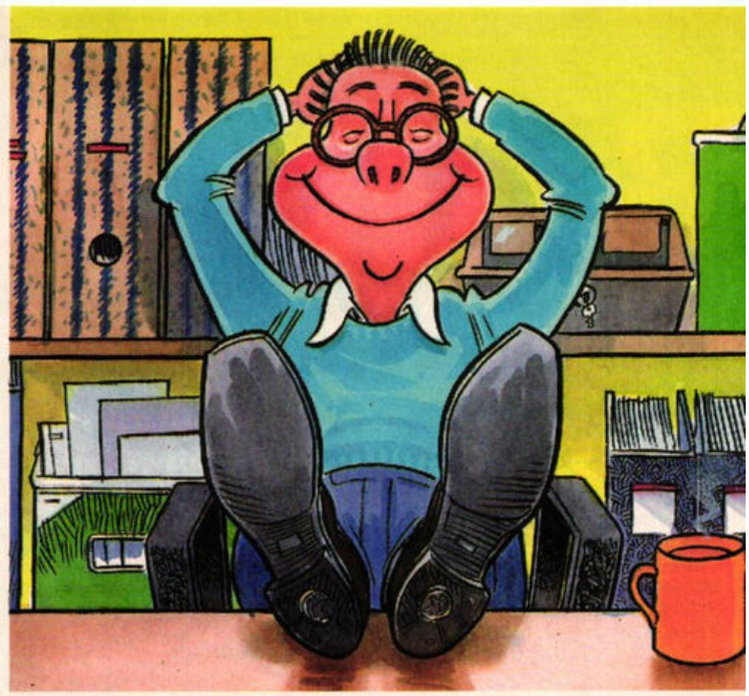


You can alter any file in mysterious ways so that it's impossible to erase it or it disappears from its window, Clive Parker shows you how

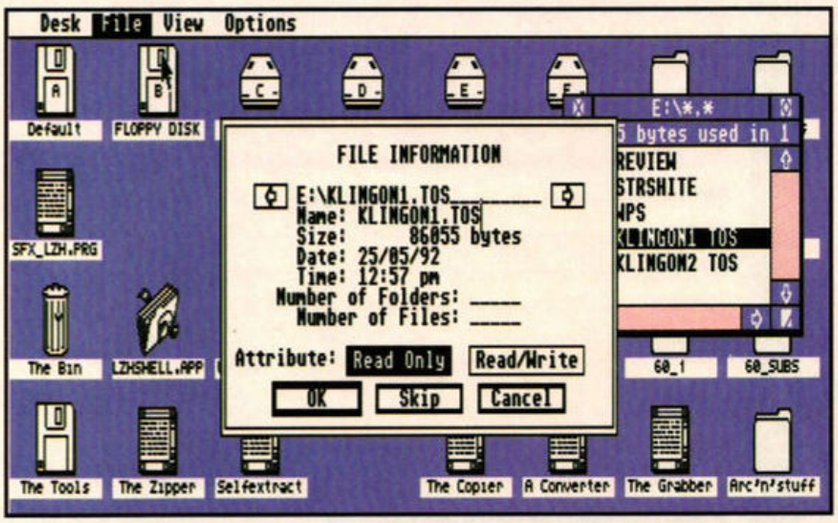
How would you like to stop yourself from accidentally deleting your files or prevent others from maliciously doing so? It's dead easy to drag stuff to the bin and delete by mistake if you're a bit tired or not fully paying attention to what you are doing, and it's not always possible to have every disk write protected by opening the tab. Of course, with a hard drive there's no write protect tab to open anyway. So what can you do about it?

Data protection acts

There are two or three different ways to protect the data on your disks, the simplest and easiest way is to use the Show Information command – Show Info on older STs – from the Desktop File menu. All you have to do is select a file on a disk by clicking on it once so that it is highlighted, then go to the File menu and select Show Information, the File Information dialog box opens up and presents you with a couple of options. You can now change the name of the file and change the file attribute from Read/Write to Read Only by selecting the box in the Attribute line.

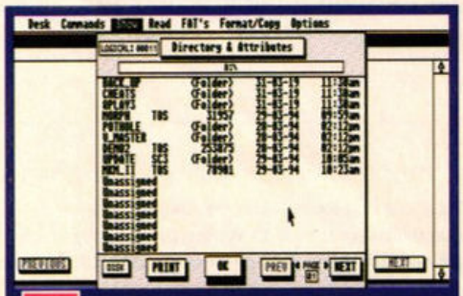
Selecting Read Only changes the information in file header so that it becomes impossible to delete a file in the usual way, if you drag a Read Only file to the bin you get a terse message telling you that your disk is write protected or the file is set to Read Only status. If you have a Desk Accessory that clashes with other software you can easily disable it and then set it to read only status, it's then impossible to accidentally run the programs. You can do the same trick with any kind of file including Auto folder programs and data files. At the very least it prevents any unauthorised person from deleting your software either accidentally or deliberately. If you are using TOS 2.06, files set

"It's not always possible to have every disk write protected by opening the tab"

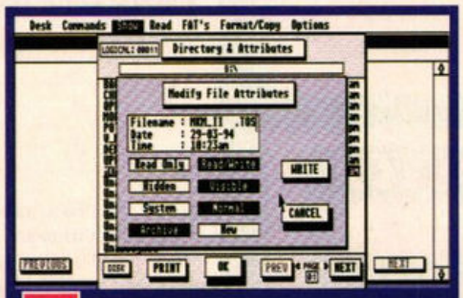


A typical File Information box, next Tuesday. Just click on the Read Only box to prevent a file being erased by fanatically politically correct wallies protesting about the word "man" being a part of the phrase "ergonomic file management interactive virtual reality workstation. Version 2.0.1"

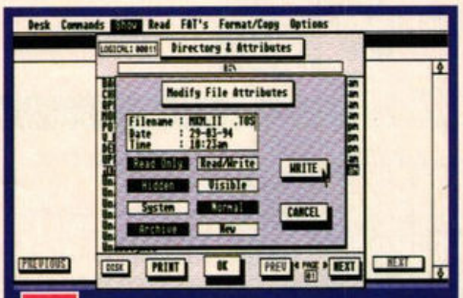
CARVING ATTRIBUTES WITH KNIFE ST



1 Run Knife ST and use the Directory Command from the Show menu. This is a very powerful command and it displays hidden and system files on any ST disk.



2 Click on the file in the display depending on what attributes you want to change. The Modify File Attributes box also enables you to change the file name along with its attributes.



3 After changing the name of the file and altering any of its attributes, you modify the file by selecting the Write button in the dialog box. The file is then updated with the new data.

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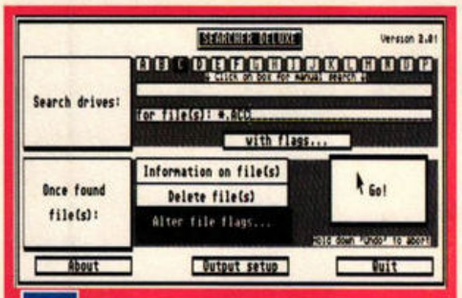
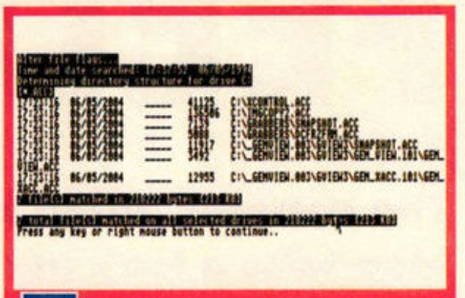
CHANGING OTHER INTERESTING STUFF



1 Searcher Deluxe is a handy little utility designed primarily to search hard drives for specific files, hence the name. It does have some other useful functions such as the ability to alter the date and time stamps of files.

2 Choosing the Alter File Flags button enables you to change the attributes of all files found during a search, so if you want alter the time stamp of all your Accessories to the current system date you just select that function.

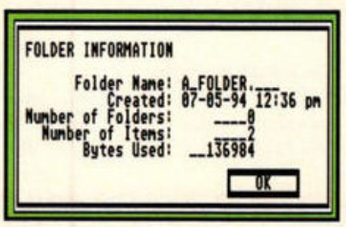


3 Entering a search mask of *.ACC tells Searcher to look only for files with a .ACC file extension, it searches through the complete drive including all sub-directories and modifies each file that matches the search mask.

to Read Only status are marked with a small triangle like this – Δ ALIEN3.PRG – so you can tell at a glance if a file is protected or not.

Hidden agenda

Another way to protect a file is to hide it. No, not in a small box under the bed, a hidden file exists on the disk but it is not displayed in the disk window or in a file selector box. This only works with TOS versions below 2.06, TOS version 2.06 and above perversely displays the "hidden" files. This can be very confusing if you use a TOS switcher because a program you can see and use using 2.06 vanishes when you switch to your ST's original TOS. Then again, if you have programs that don't work correctly with your old TOS version you can "hide" them, but you can still see and run them when you switch to TOS 2.06.

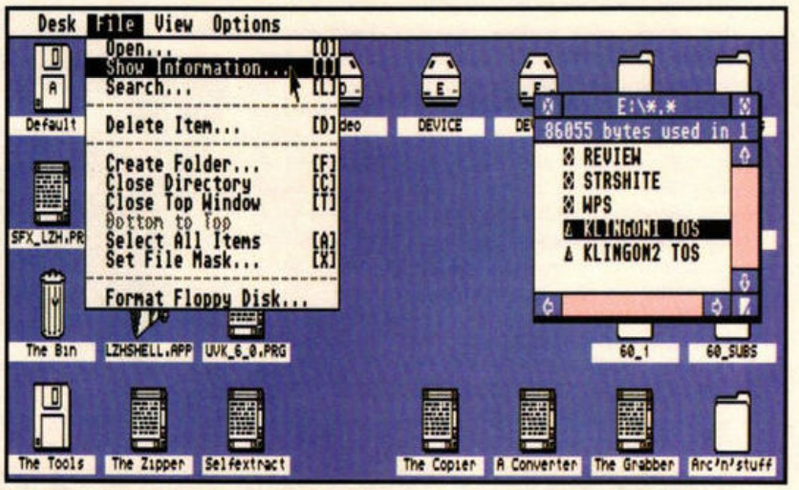


On old versions of TOS you can't change the name of a folder using the Show Information command...

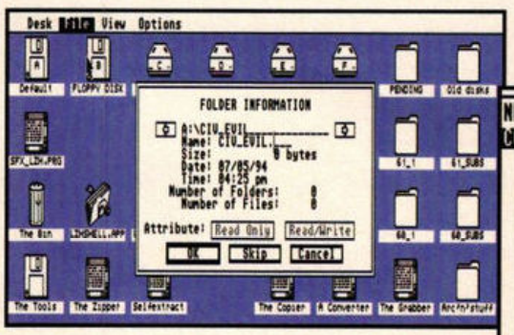
Assumed names

If you have TOS 1.4 on your STFM or any version of TOS on the STE you can change the name of a folder in the same way as a file using the Show Info command and editing the name in the Folder Information box. On older versions of TOS the easiest way to change a folder name is to create a new folder and then copy the files to the new folder. You can't change a folder to Read Only status using the Show Information command, the best way to protect a folder from being deleted is to set a file within it to Read Only and Hidden status. Then, if you try to delete it the system is unable to do so because it can't delete a folder with a protected file inside it.

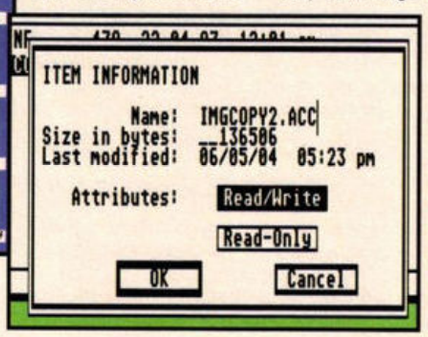
Now you know how to protect your files from accidents, carelessness and spiteful little brothers and sisters with a mouse fixation, or a helpful mum keeping your desk neat and tidy for you. ***stf***



Hmmm, files eh? You can copy them, hide them, protect them and give them a fast loading boost - but do they thank you? Nope. They're an ungrateful bunch, every last one of 'em. They won't even lend you a fiver at the end of the month.



...but you can on newer versions of TOS. This is the Folder Information dialog box on TOS 2.06 on the MegaSTE.



You can alter the name of a file using all versions of TOS using the Show Info command from the Desktop file menu, this Item Information box is from the TOS 1.62 Desktop.

JARGON BUSTERS: ATTRIBUTES EXPLAINED

Certain parts of a file header called attribute flags pass information to your ST's operating system, each attribute tells your ST to treat the file in a certain way depending whether it is enabled (on) or disabled (off.)

Fast Load: On TOS 1.4 and above setting fast load prevents your ST from clearing RAM before loading a new program, this can save time on STs with 4MBytes or more of memory.

Hidden – Visible: Enabling the hidden file attribute "hides" the file so it is invisible when viewed from the Desktop.

Load in TT RAM: On the TT or on STs with the Marpet XtraRAM +8 board, this bit tells the system to load the program into TT RAM.

Original – Archive: Tells your ST whether the file is an original copy or if it has been modified on TOS 1.4 and above.

Read Only – Read/Write: Files set to Read Only status cannot be erased by dragging them to the bin or modified.

System – Normal: Er, not an ST attribute at all. This flag is actually used by MS-DOS on the PC to identify a system file such as COMMAND.COM.

Use TT RAM: On the TT or on STs with the Marpet XtraRAM +8 board, this bit tells the system to use the TT RAM as work space.

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FEEDBACK

The debates about piracy continues and we also take a look at a new way to get more involved in game playing

Back to the fold

I read with interest Darren Smithson's letter in *STF* 58 – welcome back to the fold and we are all glad that you have seen the error of your ways. Just a year ago I bought my 1040STE for £250 as my brother-in-law had decided to go for the "everyone follow like blind sheep" PC. The ST is great for every possible use and if you really think that you need a PC just stop and think how much it would cost you to replace all your favourite ST programs – I'm sure it won't take you very long to change your mind.

Nick Holgate, Lancashire

stf: *Money is indeed the sobering thought that makes people think very carefully before changing systems – it's good to hear that you're getting so much out of your machine.*

Two many disks!

Why don't you forget this policy of two Cover Disks and leave the magazine price at an affordable £3.50? My idea is for you to have one Cover Disk and advertise the second in your magazine for, say, £1 and whoever it appeals to can order it. For example, on issue 58, the *Quartet* Cover Disk was totally useless to me because I'm not into the music side of the ST. How about it?

Johnny Gringo (alias), Slough

stf: *Yes, but the brilliant thing about you getting a second Cover Disk with a commercial program on it is that it gives you the chance to find out for a nominal amount of money whether you actually have the potential to get into the music (or other relatively specialist area) of the ST. If you don't try out these things then you'll never get to know whether you could, in fact, be the next producer of the latest up and coming band with your incredible ST knowledge. And, judging from our sales figures of our double disk issues, you're in the minority.*

And another thing – the disk isn't completely useless, because if you try out the music side of things with, say, Quartet, and decide that you really aren't interested, if nothing else at least you have a disk which you can reformat and use for whatever you like.

Joy and delight

I can't begin to explain how delighted I was when I picked up the May issue of *ST FORMAT* and

PIRACY ISN'T THE ONLY REASON THE ST GAMES INDUSTRY IS, ER,

stf: *We've had a huge response to the feature on piracy that we ran a couple of issues ago – it was something many of you have very strong views on. The feature posed the question "Is piracy killing ST games?" rather than "Piracy is killing ST games and nothing else is" and the conclusions which followed and all of the quotations which were included came from readers who had replied to our survey a few weeks previously. That perhaps wasn't obvious because we didn't include names and addresses in order to protect the many people who were concerned about being reported to FAST. It was what you believe – as the cover line said "we investigate your attitudes to piracy."*

Piracy is obviously not the only – or perhaps even the main factor that has contributed to the lack of available ST games – but it is a subject that has definitely had quite an impact. We were discussing piracy first and foremost, not the whole gamut of reasons why the games industry has changed its structure.

The recession

I read with great interest the article on piracy and I agree with your views entirely although I question the size of the impact on sales of software, with the exception of very expensive programs such as *Cubase*. I believe that the major reason for the slump in software sales is the recession; businesses have been having a very hard time recently.

It does not follow that someone with a pirate copy of a game would have bought it had he not been able to steal it – the notion that piracy is eating huge chunks out of the games industry income is based on this assumption.

PS: how about more samples for *Quartet* on a future Cover Disk?

Peter Maynard, Newcastle

stf: *Quite right, not necessarily, but had he not have been able to steal it then there is a far better chance that he would have bought it than not. And there are some more Quartet samples on this month's Cover Disk.*

Technology

There's another major element in the decline of ST games which has been overlooked. This element is technology. Game designers want their creations to look, sound and feel good in their pieces of software. These demands require powerful accessories and hardware which only newer machines can cater for like the Falcon, PCs and powerful Amigas. Accessories like CD-ROMs and large amounts of memory are needed for these tasks, while hardware like fast 68020 or 68030 processors speed up the program.

Unfortunately the ST cannot handle these requirements so the majority of software is not converted to the machine as it would scroll badly, sound awful or look mind-blowingly crap.

Chris Boot, Cheshire

stf: *Very true. And with the plethora of platforms software publishers can choose to write for, they're bound to choose those that offer the biggest commercial returns.*

£1's a normal price

I am outraged by your total ignorance of the outside world, everything to you seems to be put down to piracy. No-one is supposed to sell original games for £1.50, so what's the rock bottom price, then?

I regularly sell original games in the box with instructions for sometimes £1 and can even obtain brand new games (legally) which I usually sell for £2 or less.

So, piracy is to blame for the decline of the ST software market – that's the biggest load of manure I've ever heard. To put things into perspective, look at the size of the user base of the ST compared to other formats.

The Amiga has a bigger user base than the ST, but I would think the ST has a bigger user base than the C64 which has a bigger base than the Spectrum. Now remembering this, and that piracy is alleged to be responsible for the lack of support, then why, last year, when I owned an Amiga A1200 (yuk!) and tried to sell my software off for around £2 each, three-quarters of the calls I had were not interested because they were originals. At that time I had 100 ST games and around 75 from my Amiga. I sold all ST games within a month or so but I couldn't even give the Amiga ones away – I was asked no end of times whether I had copies – they were willing to pay £2 per disk for a copy but not £2 for a boxed original.

If by some miracle, this letter gets into publication, I would be grateful if you would not publish my name and address.

Name and address withheld as requested

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■ If you would like to correct or add to any of the entries, please write to us at Essential Contacts, *ST FORMAT*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath Avon BA1 2BW.

found two outstanding Cover Disks – the full version of *Quartet* which I'd wanted for ages and a demo of *Cannon Fodder* which is so good I'm going straight out to buy it!

In fact, the only thing which annoyed me about the mag was the letter from Michael Jones who moaned about *Civilization* and *Frontier*. What is his problem? I own a copy of *Civilization* and have played it to death and still love it and *Frontier* looks excellent as well, although I don't actually have it. What we need is less of these people who slag off the best ST games out and more supporters like yours truly. If Michael Jones reckons that the top ranking ST software is bad, he should go out and buy a ZX81 to give him a picture of what bad really is.

Ant Barden, Surrey

stf: *Glad you enjoyed the issue, Ant, but do you really think it's fair to make anybody have to suffer ZX81 games?*

Keep them together!

I do not see the need for your Falcon material to be put away in a separate section. Falcon is a TOS computer just like the ST – with, I believe, remarkably compatible hardware too – and most of what is written about either computer should be of at least some interest to any TOS user and/or programmer. I am saying this as an ST-er who has very little hope of gathering enough money to buy a Falcon of my own in the near future but to whom the existence of this "super-ST" is a source of inspiration in my hobby, in TOS programming, as well as something to generally dream about.

PS: The name of the cover girl on issue 57, I have deduced from the article inside, to be Sarah. That leaves me with the inevitable question – who is Sarah's dentist?

Mårten Lindström, Sweden

stf: *Thanks for your views on that, Marten, it looks as if we'll be keeping the magazine as it is now, so you need not worry about us creating any more sections.*

Difference of opinion

Recently I've been debating whether or not it is worth upgrading from my STE to a Falcon. I've decided to upgrade, not immediately, but soon! My decision was not helped by contradictory reports in magazine articles about compatibility, Atari support and so on.

In *ST FORMAT 58* you stated that many ST programs just don't

NOT AS THRIVING AS ONCE IT WAS

stf: ***Now why wouldn't you want us to publish your name? And that just goes to show that Amiga owners are pretty peculiar. If you know why an Amiga owner would prefer to spend the same amount on a copied game rather than the original, please write and let us know, it seems pretty baffling to me.***

No ST games in the shops

Piracy is wrong and must be discouraged. Might I suggest another reason why it happens? As far as I know there is only one shop in Northumberland that now stocks software for the ST. As a result the games that I've bought in the last couple of years have been through mail order.

The average delay in waiting for games is about eight weeks with some disks taking about six months to arrive! At the moment I have been waiting for six weeks for *Hook* and *Dreamlands* to arrive – both of which should have been readily available. With such delays it is easy to understand people being tempted to "borrow" copies from friends. Having made the decision that you've got to have a particular game there's nothing worse than having to wait months to get a chance to play that game. I would suggest to the software publishers that a good way to reduce piracy is to ensure their advertised software is readily available.

Paul Humphreys, Northumberland

stf: ***Again, very understandable but still illegal. And you're completely right, of course, there is no excuse why advertised games, especially those like Hook and Dreamlands which have been out for a significant period of time are not available immediately.***

Rape and...

What were you thinking of when you equated pirating a disk with rape? How would you explain that to a rape victim? I'm fully aware that piracy is illegal and needs to be stamped out, but keep things proportional. Our judicial system punishes different crimes with different sentences and theft and rape both have their places.

Jason Kain, London SE9

...piracy

Hiya, this is to *ST FORMAT*, I think you're really wonderful! Thanks for *Quartet* this month but I've never read such a pile of **** as that piece about piracy... who do you think you are that you can compare a kid copying a computer game with a rapist! That was really sick.**

Grainger Reece

stf: ***This might sound like a case of wimping out of this argument but the rape comparison was, totally genuinely, a reader's viewpoint. I included it because it was a very thought-provoking comment – and provoke thought it obviously did. And although it's not the same thing, I know, how would you feel if you spent years and years of time, effort and money programming a game to have kids copy it? The estimated proportion of pirated copies of some games to legal copies is around 10:1. If you thought you had only ten per cent of the earnings you were entitled after years of hard work you'd be unlikely to feel magnanimous towards kids copying games, in fact you might feel a tad irritated, to put it mildly. Yes, it was a strong comparison but not totally without relevance.***

A moral question

Even though I'm totally against piracy I have very nice friends who own pirated software for their Amigas (errrr!). I'm in two minds as to whether I should report them to FAST or not. My first thought is that I know that they are committing a crime and I am concealing the information. The second is that they are very very good friends indeed and I would hate to lose them or for them to have to pay for their actions. On many occasions I have tried to persuade them to wipe all of their disks but my efforts have been unsuccessful. I really hope you can give me some advice on this matter and to anybody else who may be in the same situation as me.

Marcus Reeves, Berkshire

stf: ***Um, that question is a bit out of the scope of STF – you sound as if you need an agony aunt.***

■ Piracy - something you all feel very strongly about.

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work under TOS 4 and MultiTOS, yet in a recent issue of *ST Applications* I was led to believe that this is untrue with comments like these: "OK, MultiTOS is not perfect but there is *Geneva*, SMS2 and soon Magimix as replacements for the built in TOS." "I found that I had very few compatibility programs at all," "I use MultiTOS to run programs which I have never been able to run on my Mega STE..." "I was soon amazed at the high level of compatibility" and so on. You must remember that nothing is perfect – Windows, System 7, PCs, Bosnia, Skodas..!

Perhaps if different magazines conferred on the basics it might instill some confidence in the buying public which, in turn, would help sales figures. Luckily I read *ST Applications* before I read *ST FORMAT!*

Ian Simmins, Devon

stf: *But the problem with that is that you think the only reason it was lucky you read STA before ST FORMAT was that it gave you the answer you wanted to hear, which was not necessarily the one that would be correct for most people. For starters, STA is very technical compared to STF which attracts different readers who, in turn, use different programs.*

We've found that most programs that use GEM run on the Falcon with no problems, but there are also variances in the compatibility between the different versions of TOS adding another problem into the equation. Incidentally, Magimix? Surely that's a type of food processor? Perhaps the writer was getting confused with Mag!x which is a convenient place for me to remind you that I you haven't read the review this issue, it's on page 50.

As for magazines conferring, well, what do you think we are? We are in competition with each other, after all!

That was an un usually lively letters page – if you've got anything you want to add to either the piracy debates or anything else that was brought up in this issue, just write to The Editor, Feedback, *ST FORMAT*, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, Avon BA1 2BW. This is sadly my last issue, thanks everyone, it's been great – cheers!

DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME, KIDS

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Have you ever got fed up with using a joystick and want to be involved in the game more? If you have, why don't you make one of these?

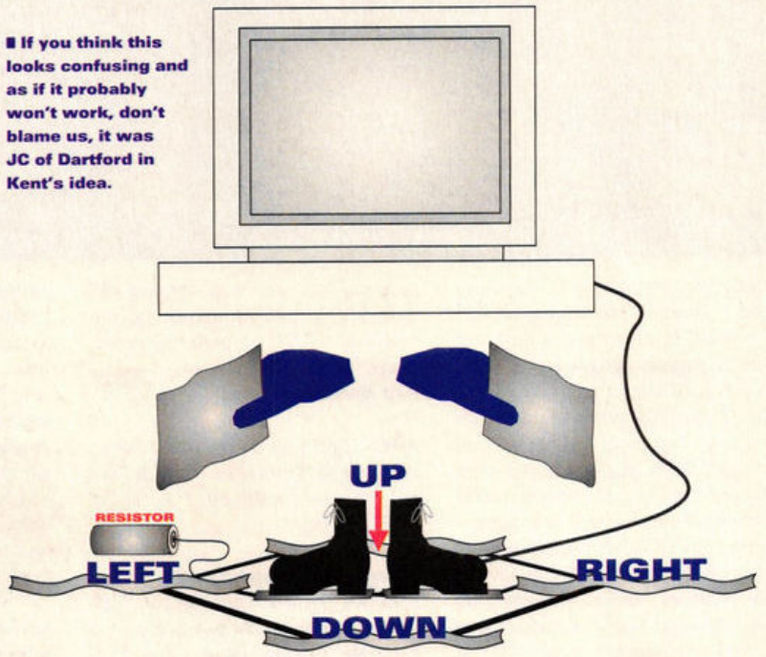
Stuff you need

Old joystick lead type thing
Kitchen foil (eight pieces)
Resisitor (take one out of an old joystick)
Shoes
Gloves
Sticky tape or soldering iron for sticking wires and foil in place
Wire
Paper or *ST FORMAT*

Make it up according to the diagram then put the shoes and gloves on. Stand in the middle of the pieces of foil. Make sure the one labelled "up" is nearest to your computer, left is to the left and so on. Plug the lead type thing into the joystick port. Play! If you stand on the one labelled "up" it does the same as if you move a joystick up and so on. If you clap your hands then it does the same as the fire button on a joystick. Put some paper or *ST FORMAT* in the middle of the pieces of foil where you stand, so you don't trip over the wires all the time.

JC, Kent

If you think this looks confusing and as if it probably won't work, don't blame us, it was JC of Dartford in Kent's idea.



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ST FORMAT'S GUIDE TO BUYING BY MAIL ORDER

The need for buying by mail order increases as high street shops with ST peripherals get scarcer. Heed our advice

1. Before you send any money, ring the supplier to make sure the item you require is in stock. Ask questions about the company's policy on delivery and returns of faulty equipment. Make sure there are no hidden costs such as postage and packaging. Find out when you can realistically expect to receive your goods.

2. Make sure you always read the small print on adverts.

3. Beware of companies that do not include their address on their adverts. Also, avoid companies which do not answer or return your calls.

4. By far the best method of payment is by credit card. If you're ordering goods which come to more than £100 in total value remember that you are legally entitled to claim compensation from some credit companies if the retailer goes bust. Check your credit card company's policy. You can also try to get extra insurance in advance.

5. If you're not paying by credit card, pay by cheque. Never send cash, and avoid using postal orders.

6. Always keep a record and keep it somewhere safe. If you are buying by credit card keep a note of the time of the order and ask for an order number. When ordering anything over the telephone, always double-check the price before you part with your money.

7. If you are sending a cheque keep a note of the cheque number, the date and the exact value. Make sure you know the name and some details of the mail order company.

8. When you receive your goods, check them carefully. If anything is missing or faulty, contact the supplier immediately.

9. Always order from the most recent issue of *ST FORMAT*.

10. If a problem does arise, contact the supplier in the first instance. Calmly and politely tell them your problem. Most problems turn out to be minor hitches or misunderstandings that can easily be resolved. If you think you have a genuine grievance, contact your local Trading Standards Officer. The number is in the 'phone book.

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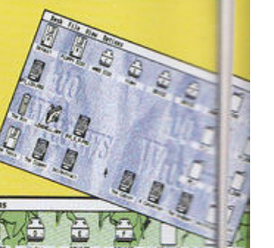

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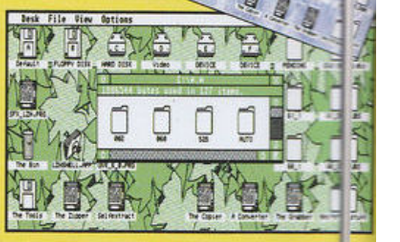

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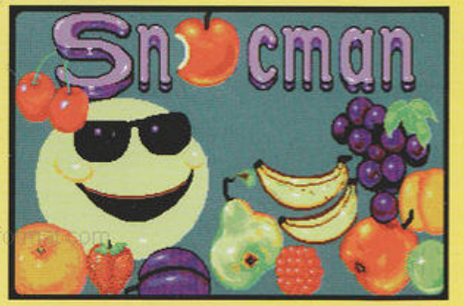

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